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This dairy and gluten-free mousse cake is chocolate heaven



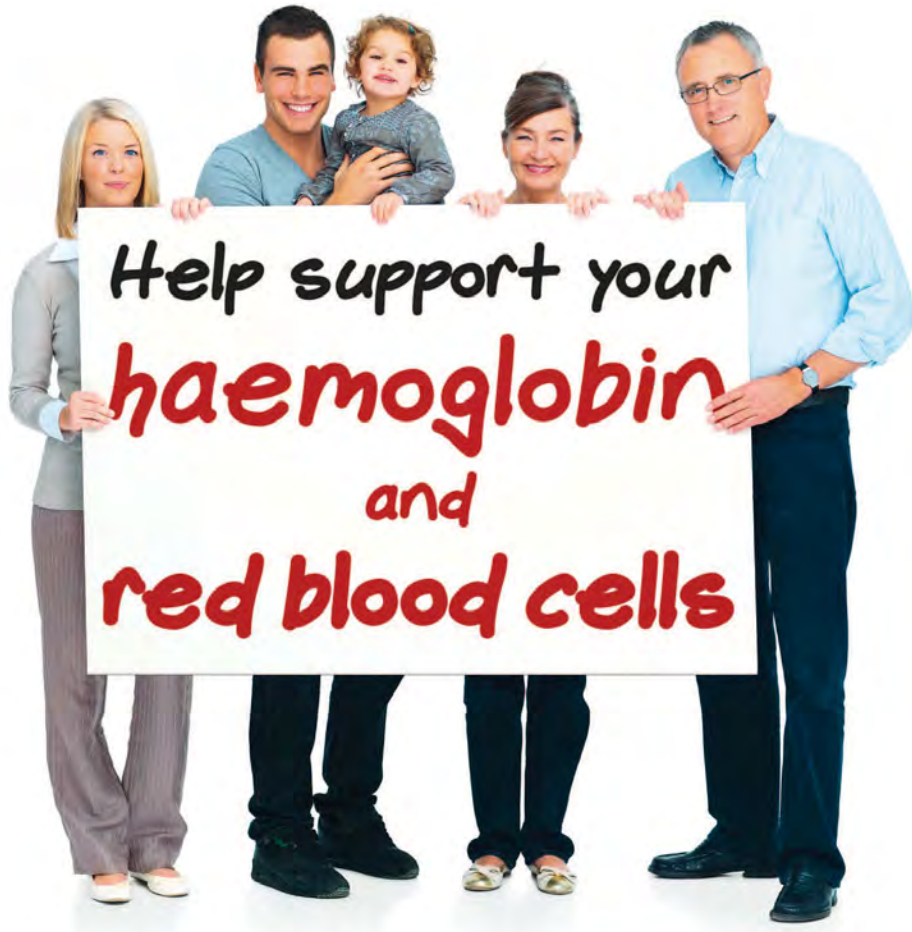
RISING STAR

Olia Hercules cooks a Ukrainian feast inspired by her childhood

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THE QUEEN'S AWARDS FOR ENTERPRISE INNOVATION 2013

VITABIOTICS
SCIENCE OF HEALTHY LIVING

The UK's best-selling, award-winning vegetarian magazine



© DAN PEARCE

Welcome

The chillier days of October provide the perfect excuse to head into the kitchen and try something new, and we highly recommend the latest foodie trend – fermenting (page 29). You can ferment everything from beans to tea, but a great place to start is with labneh yogurt cheese. It's cheap and easy to do – just take a few minutes to prepare it in the evening and by the morning you'll have a delicious homemade ingredient that can be used for all kinds of sweet and savoury recipes, including our cover star courgette and thyme tart.

The Women's Institute is celebrating its centenary year, and our feature (page 34) discovers these proactive women are about so much more than perfect preserves and beautiful bakes. For decades they've been championing issues as diverse as equal pay for women, Keeping Britain Tidy and Fairtrade food, and the modern WI's campaigns have focused on sustainable farming and SOS for Honeybees – but they do still know how make a lovely Victoria sandwich (page 37).

Now barbecue season is over, it's time to move on to a new approach to cooking for a crowd, whether it's feeding your family or a gathering of friends. We've plenty of recipe ideas to inspire you, from the exotic to the everyday. Try Ghillie Basan's mouth-watering Middle Eastern mezze (page 56); Prashad restaurant chef Kaushy Patel's vibrant menu of Indian dishes (page 50); Liz Martin's 'make and take' meals – with leftovers for lunch (page 44); or Lorraine Pascale's nutritious yet delicious comfort cooking (page 40).

Enjoy…
Lindsey Harrad, Editor



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See page 84 for full details.

COVER RECIPE: Courgette, thyme and labneh tart (page 33). Photograph by Tara Fisher
From *Fermented* by Charlotte Pike (Kyle Books)

APPEARING THIS ISSUE...



© ROB WICKS/EAT PICTURES

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'I find it fascinating to take one vegetable and cook it in a variety of ways, using flavours from all over the world to achieve completely different and exciting results'



© TARA FISHER

29 **CHARLOTTE PIKE**

'Fermented foods really shake up the senses and the taste buds... and you don't need to invest in much equipment or time'



© KRIS KIRKHAM

60 **OLIA HERCULES**

'You have to be much more creative when cooking vegetarian. It can be so much fun – I love working with vegetables, they are all so beautiful'

recycle
When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

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> The success of the WI has been in its ability to nurture a sense of community... Staying relevant, that's always been the key

MARYLYN HAINES-EVANS ON 100 YEARS OF THE WI, PAGE 34





Allergy UK
ALLERGY FRIENDLY PRODUCT

the allergy + free from show
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Cruelty-Free International

Vegan

Find Ecozone at these retailers:

John Lewis · ocado.com The online supermarket · Holland & Barrett we're good for you. · Dunelm · Whole Foods Market · HOMEBASE

www.ecozone.com



Olive lover

For the ultimate olive fan, the new Taylor's Eye Witness olive serving set comes complete with stylish olive sticks and a separate section for discarded stones.

£25 from www.bakewellcookshop.com

Nuts & nibbles

Greet your guests with pre-dinner nibbles or dips served in an elegant stainless steel Bolo bowl and board set.

£49 from www.in-spaces.com



Service, please

These ornate ivory ceramic servers are the perfect utensils for your guests to help themselves.

£19.50 from www.marksandspencer.com





Perfect platter

A simple board is a stylish way to serve cheese, fruit or other mezze. Try this naturally smooth board handmade from sustainable mango wood as part of a Fairtrade scheme in India.

£35 from www.puji.com

DRESS TO IMPRESS

If staying in is the new going out, make your homemade dishes look even more special with stylish accessories that are perfect for entertaining mezze-style.



Moroccan vibe

An exotic North African-style tray is ideal for handing around glasses of mint tea at the end of the meal. Or simply use to display a tempting pile of warm flatbreads.

£29 from www.idyllhome.co.uk

Serve & store

A fun way to serve dips or roasted vegetables in oil, these little jars are handy for storage in the fridge too.

Set of three, £8.50 from www.lukuhome.com

EDITOR'S PICK





Centre of attention

The Just Slate Company's serving set has a hand-beaten copper finish and comes with black acacia wooden servers for a really stunning centrepiece.

£60 from www.black-by-design.co.uk



Rustic charm

Eco-friendly and Fairtrade brand Dassie offers these handmade bowls for nibbles. With a simple homespun look they come in four muted colours to mix and match.

£14.95 each from www.dassie.co.uk



Gold blend

Don't forget the after-dinner coffee. This Linea gold cafetière immediately gives your home brew a more exotic look.

£35 from www.houseoffraser.co.uk

newshoots

ALL THE LATEST VEGETARIAN AND VEGAN LIFESTYLE NEWS AND PRODUCTS, PLUS WINE, EVENTS AND MUCH MORE...

FOOD WASTE SOLUTIONS

A NEW ONLINE TOOL HELPS YOU SAVE FOOD AND MONEY

We throw away 7 million tons of food and drink every year from our homes, most of which is perfectly edible. The scale of the waste is not only bad for the environment, it's the equivalent of throwing away £12.5 billion from our pockets too. In fact, research suggests that the average family throws away £60 worth of good food every month.

As part of its mission to tackle the problem, Love Food Hate Waste has launched a new online interactive tool – also available on mobile and tablet – which is designed to help people avoid throwing away everyday foods at home and help busy families save up to £700 a year.

The digital tool, called Your Food Waste Assistant, provides people with practical help and advice on more than 600 food products, offering more than 30 solutions and tips to common problems that can result in food being wasted.

Research from Wrap has found that household food waste arises from a number of complex, often unrelated behaviours. This new device offers a quick and easy way of finding solutions to food waste. All you need to do is specify the food you have thrown away. The tool then suggests ways in which it could have been used, with links to recipe ideas, storage solutions and tips to prolong the life of foods, helping to avoid wastage in the future.

Emma Marsh, head of Love Food Hate Waste, says: 'None of us set out to waste food. Busy lifestyles and changing plans mean good food sometimes ends up going to waste. Our new Food Waste Assistant is a unique tool that offers practical hints and tips to help us all to waste less food and save more money.'

Your Food Waste Assistant can be found at **www.lovefoodhatewaste.com**.





Make your food go further...

STALE BREAD Whizz up old crusts and store in the freezer. Add garlic, cheese and herbs to use as a crunchy topping for savoury bakes.

BLACK BANANAS Turn squidgy bananas into healthy sugar-free 'ice cream'. Simply freeze overnight, allow to soften for 20 minutes, then whizz in the food processor until soft and creamy.

SQUISHY TOMATOES Toms too soft for a salad? Roast with oil in the oven and use for a pasta sauce, or blitz fresh in the blender and use in curries or sauces instead of tinned tomatoes.

OVER-RIPE PEARS Pop them into your slow cooker (or a big pan on the stove) with a little red wine and sugar, then simmer for a delicious dessert to serve with yogurt or ice cream.



Vintage apple lunchbox, £4.95
www.dotcomgiftshop.com

LOVE YOUR LEFTOVERS

Storage can be stylish – try these handy containers for keeping leftovers fresh in the fridge, or take them for lunch the next day.



Aladdin mason salad jar, £14.99
www.johnlewis.com



Insulated big dots lunch bag, £12.98
www.beckyandlolo.co.uk

VEGFEST IN LONDON

The leading vegan lifestyle event, VegFest, returns to Olympia London on 10–11 October, with a packed programme of events and exhibitors celebrating everything vegan.

The event showcases over 200 stalls featuring food, beauty products and fashion, with exhibitors offering lots of special discounts and free samples to try. Visitors can also be inspired by events and attractions including vegan cookery demonstrations, a Living Raw prep zone, a performance area offering entertainment including comedy and live music, and talks on nutrition, health, campaigns and lifestyle issues. As always, there will be a line-up of high-profile speakers from all over the world, and a range of invited celebrities and special guests are expected to make an appearance too.

Take a break from browsing to tuck into delicious vegan food from 15 specialist caterers, while young people can join in the fun with entertainment and cookery classes designed for children, plus a TeenVGN zone.





● *For all show and ticket information, go to* **www.london.vegfest.co.uk**. *Tickets can be bought in advance or on the door; entry is free for children under 16.*

WIN A JUICY PRIZE AT VEGFEST!

Come and visit the *Vegetarian Living* team at VegFest London, as we've teamed up with Tribest to offer a fabulous prize draw for new subscribers at the show.

Simply take out a subscription to *Vegetarian Living* at VegFest London and you'll be in with a chance to win the Tribest Slowstar Vertical Juicer (worth £399), which crushes fruit and vegetables at an incredibly gentle 47 rpm, reducing oxidation for superior juice quality, while still producing 'slow' juice extra fast. A mincing attachment can also turn the Slowstar into a multipurpose tool to make sorbets, nut butters and sauces. This two-in-one machine is the perfect solution to get the most out of your fresh produce. Find out more at **www.tribest.co.uk**.



MY VEGGIE LIFE

Anna Solaiman



Tell us about your life...
I'm a bridal hair and make-up artist.

How do you feel about winning PETA's 'sexiest vegan' award 2015?
It was a real surprise to win! The best part is having a platform to be a voice for animals.

How long have you been vegan?
Almost two years. I became vegetarian first, but as I learned more about the egg and dairy industries I realised I had to become vegan. I've never looked back since.

What are your go-to meat-free meals?
My parents are from Bangladesh, so it has to be rice with veg curries. For a snack, it's avocado on toast with cherry tomatoes, if I'm being good. If not, it's Oreos with vegan whipped cream!

What's your favourite cooking ingredient...
Nutritional yeast. It's so versatile and has an addictive umami taste.

Your must-read vegan blog or website?
Angela Liddon's www.ohsheglows.com blog has really helped, as well as the Facebook group What Fat Vegans Eat.

I love being vegan because...
There's no better feeling than educating yourself and then doing everything you can to switch to a life of compassion. It's like a huge weight lifted off your shoulders. And in return, I have more energy and feel happier, healthier – and of course, sexier!

DATES FOR THE DIARY

17 October

NORTHERN VEGAN FESTIVAL
Returning to Manchester for 2015, this popular vegan festival promises to be bigger and better than ever, with events on offer across four city centre venues. The programme includes talks and cooking demonstrations, film screenings, food stalls, free tastings, a vegan beer and cider festival at the Thirsty Scholar pub, plus vegan speed dating!
www.northernveganfestival.com

23–25 October

DARTMOUTH FOOD FESTIVAL
This Devon festival (pictured right) has evolved into one of the leading UK food and wine events, offering an exciting mix of celebrity chef appearances, food markets, family events and demonstrations to celebrate the talent and produce in the Southwest. This year's line-up includes Diana Henry, James Ramsden, Mark Hix and Mitch Tonks – plus entry is free for visitors.
www.dartmouthfoodfestival.com

1–31 October

GREAT BATH FEAST
The Great Bath Feast is a month-long foodie festival with events showcasing the best of local produce and talent, as well as visits from celebrity chefs, including Matt Tebbutt, Nigella Lawson and Tom Kerridge. Events include gin tasting, urban foraging, a celebration of artisan cheese and a vintage kitchenware fair, with shops and restaurants throughout the city holding special events too.
www.greatbathfeast.co.uk



BUY A BETTER BURGER

MEET THE MAKER





Plantalicious founder Barry Honeycombe has developed a delicious range of vegan burgers, sausage rolls and casseroles to tempt the taste buds.

Keen foodie Barry Honeycombe juggles a part-time day job in software sales with running Plantalicious, the company behind More Than Meat, a new and flourishing range of vegan burgers and casseroles. After years of yo-yo dieting, Barry discovered a wholefood, plant-based approach to eating, which he says transformed his life and health. 'I have a certificate in plant-based nutrition from Professor T. Colin Campbell's Centre for Nutritional Studies,' he says. 'It was while studying that I completely changed my diet. Having always been a passionate and enthusiastic cook, I turned attention to how I could craft delicious, healthy food.'

Barry was concerned by how many products aimed at the vegan market were meat- and dairy-free but still loaded with refined carbohydrates, fat, sugar and salt. 'I describe my food as "no added fat, wholefood, high protein, plant-based",' he says. 'My philosophy is to make familiar food that is great tasting and as healthy as possible, or more healthy than the alternatives. My food is not made in a lab by biochemists, it is made in small batches in a kitchen using wholefood plant proteins, and is as healthy as I can possibly make it.'

More Than Meat products are based on wheat protein with ingredients such as oats and beans for texture, all carefully flavoured and seasoned with herbs and spices. His products include More Than Beef Burgers, a 'lamb' casserole in a rich vegan red wine and tomato gravy with butter beans, flavoured with rosemary, mint and red currant jelly, plus a Lorne sausage (a rectangular sausage patty) flavoured with smoked apple, sage and fennel seeds, a recipe he also uses to fill his jumbo sausage rolls.

His meat replacement products appeal to ethical vegans and vegetarians, as well as those who want to reduce their intake of meat but still enjoy familiar, traditional foods, which also makes them an ideal choice for those who want an easy transition into a plant-based lifestyle.

When he's not out and about cooking and serving his food at local markets, Barry always has plenty of new product ideas in development, and he's also busy increasing his network of stockists. He says the 'overwhelmingly positive' feedback from customers continues to inspire him along the way. 'Seeing people enjoy my food is the best bit of this job. There is nothing like it. Knowing that I have made something that is healthy and delicious, that someone is prepared to spend their hard earned money on and enjoy is such a great feeling.'

● *Buy More Than Meat products at The Pantiles Market in Tunbridge Wells fortnightly on Saturdays, at Sydenham Market in southeast London on the second Saturday of each month, as well as online at* **www.morethanmeat.co.uk**. *Follow on Facebook at www.facebook.com/morethanmeat and on Twitter @More_Than_Meat for product updates and news.*

TASTE TEST...

3 chocolate treats

It's National Chocolate Week on 12–18 October, so we've been sampling new organic and artisan products this month... well, someone has to do it!







1 Green & Blacks

The new Green & Black's Organic Thin is made from the best organic Trinitario cocoa beans and Fairtrade ingredients and offers four delicious flavours, including Mint Crisp, Salted Caramel (our favourite!), Dark 70% and Milk 37% Chocolate.

● *£2.29 for 100g from all major retailers and selected independents.*

2 Madécasse

Handmade in Madagascar in small batches using organic, rare heirloom cocoa varieties, the new Fairtrade Madécasse Milk Chocolate Toasted Coconut Bar is made from silky smooth milk chocolate and contains delicate pieces of toasted Madagascan coconut to give it that on-trend tropical taste.

● *£2.99 for 75g from Waitrose.*

3 Chococo

Popcorn, dark chocolate and salted caramel sounds like a fantasy combo, but Dorset-based artisan brand Chococo has made it a reality with their devilishly delicious new Salted Caramel Popcorn Brittle Clusters, available in milk or dark chocolate – the dark chocolate variety is vegan too.

● *£5.95 for 100g from www.chococo.co.uk.*

On our trolley

THE VEG LIVING TEAM'S FAVOURITE NEW PRODUCTS...



Grains for mains

Much as we love to cook from scratch, sometimes those handy packs of pre-cooked rice are a real midweek meal saviour. Now Uncle Ben's has introduced new Rice & Grains varieties that combine the goodness of wholegrain rice with interesting grains such as quinoa, wild rice or pearl wheat, making it easy to incorporate a range of grains into your diet. Just add your favourite veggie stir-fry, casserole or curry!

● *£1.99 from all leading retailers.*



SHHHH... IT'S OUR SECRET

Takeaways can be a temptation when you're tired and hungry, but Our Little Secret sauces make whipping up an authentic curry so effortless, there's no need to dial for delivery. We love the award-winning spicy tomato, herb and cream-based Peshwari Makhani and the slightly milder creamy Tikka Lababdar, made with fresh tomatoes, onions, peppers and authentic Indian spices for a fresh, flavoursome take on a popular British favourite. Both varieties are veggie-friendly and made with all-natural ingredients.

● *Available from Morrisons nationwide.*

Tea & biccies

If you're going gluten-free, there's no need to miss out on elevenses, as Doves Farm's new organic cookies are Fairtrade, vegan and gluten-free – and delicious too! Try the fresh lemon zest flavour with your brew for a mid-morning treat.



● *£1.15 for a pack of two, or £1.59 for a six-cookie pack from Ocado or www.dovesfarm.co.uk.*

Drink your greens

B.Fresh is a range of cold-pressed juices, freshly made on a family farm in Shropshire. British grower Philip Maddocks came up with the idea for a new product after a freak hailstorm battered his spinach crop. A keen juicer himself, Philip decided to turn the spinach into fresh cold-pressed juice. The farm now produces a range of mixed vegetable and fruit juices that are naturally lower in sugar than classic pure-fruit juices such as orange and apple, and appeal to people who prefer the convenience of drinking their salads rather than chopping them!

● *Carrot Kick, Sweet Greens, Rock the Beets and Green Warrior are all £2 each from ASDA, or buy the full range at www.b-fresh.co.uk.*



PERFECT PAIRINGS

For October, we're matching Rachel Demuth's squash recipes (see page 22) with some rich, autumnal tipples.



Chimango Chardonnay

£10.99, Ocado

You need a wine with a good weight from a warm climate to match the robustness of the Brazilian squash and black bean stew, such as this Argentinian Chardonnay, a rich, fruity white, with lots of tropical fruit aromas and a fresh hint of pineapple.



Simply Soave Classico

£4.79, Tesco

The Classico is made from Garganega grapes from top vineyards around Soave, producing an elegant, dry honeysuckle-scented white with wonderful apple flavours and a hint of almonds. Perfect with Rachel's Brazilian stew or as a party aperitif.



Beaujolais Rouge

£4.49, Tesco

If you like your reds on the soft and juicy side, this Beaujolais is the answer. Made from the Gamay grape, this is a medium-bodied red with ripe redcurrant and black cherry flavours that will go down nicely with the squash curry.



Santa Carolina Reserva Carmenère

£12.99, Ocado

This Chilean red is an excellent match for exotic dishes, with its juicy, aromatic and slightly spicy characteristics making it an ideal partner for the onion squash and coconut curry.



Capofeto Grillo

£9.99, Ocado

An Italian gem from Sicily. Grillo is the grape native to the region, and makes a lightly aromatic dry white with plenty of flavour and freshness. Delicious with the crisp fatayer pastry and the salty flavours of feta.



Tsantali Organic Cabernet Sauvignon

£9.49, Waitrose

An organic red hailing from Halkidiki in Greece, this Cabernet Sauvignon's classic cassis and cedar flavours make a match for the Turkish fatayer and would also be lovely with a veggie moussaka.

New threat to bees



Anyone with an interest in food and farming will know our bees are struggling to survive, yet they are vital to pollinate many crops.

But now bees are facing a renewed threat, as environment minister Elizabeth Truss has taken the decision to allow neonicotinoids, a bee-harming pesticide, to be applied to 5 per cent of oil seed rape fields in the UK, despite the fact that scientific evidence that these pesticides are harmful to bees is so overwhelming that their use as a seed treatment was banned in Europe in 2013.

The government has lifted the ban in response to an application from the National Farmers' Union, which originally wanted to use the pesticide on 79 per cent of all oil seed rape fields, claiming these crops were under attack from pests.

But environmental organisations, including the Soil Association, Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, are challenging the decision and are asking why the government isn't doing more to support the use of non-chemical approaches to pest control, in line with European law. According to the EU's Sustainable Use of Pesticides Directive, farmers should be reducing their reliance on chemicals in favour of integrated pest management, which includes organic farming principles such as improved crop rotation and earlier sowing.

● *To read the Soil Association's letter to Elizabeth Truss, visit* **www.soilassociation.org**; *to write to your own MP in support of the continued ban, go to* **www.writetothem.com**; *or sign the Greenpeace petition at* **https://secure.greenpeace.org.uk/save-bees.**

Soap story

Launched just a year ago, Suma's range of 12 handmade essential oil soaps have been a huge hit, winning awards and earning great feedback from customers. Made close to the Suma HQ in the Yorkshire Pennines, this range of handcrafted soaps have the ideal credentials for anyone looking for more ethical products. The soaps are free from parabens, SLS and palm oil, are eco- and vegan-friendly and not tested on animals.

Designed to hydrate, sooth and pamper your skin, using only high quality natural ingredients, the base of each bar is made with olive oil, coconut oil, and shea butter, using a traditional process that helps each bar retain all of the soap's natural glycerine, producing a rich, creamy lather that is kind and nourishing, even for sensitive skins.



Each soap is beautifully coloured using herbs, spices, flowers and clays, and individually boxed, so they make ideal gifts too.

● *Buy Suma soaps from www.goodnessdirect.co.uk for £2.10 per bar.*

Karin Ridgers, passionate vegan presenter and founder of VeggieVision TV, reveals what she's loving this month...



My new favourite thing



We had a super time on the Isle of Wight recently, which started with a relaxing crossing on Wightlink Ferries, complete with a lovely cup of Costa coffee with soya milk too.

We stayed at the Seaview Hotel in the pretty fishing village of Seaview. With notice they cater well for vegans: our full English breakfast came with vegan sausages and meat-free bacon, plus we could also help ourselves to fresh fruit, cereals, toast, soya milk and juices, which really set us up for a day of exploring.

On our second night we wanted to do something different for dinner, so we stocked up at the supermarket and local farm shops and headed to the beach for a dinner picnic and BBQ. We had the beach to ourselves and it was great fun, and we even had food left over for snacks the next day.

Seaview is a rather chic hotel and offers stunning views across the Solent to Portsmouth and the Spinnaker Tower, as well as the famous sea forts – perfect for sipping a nice glass of wine and gazing across at the sunset.

www.wightlink.co.uk
www.seaviewhotel.co.uk

● For cookery, celebrities and news, visit **www.veggievision.tv**.

HAPPY HALLOWEEN!



Bat cupcake toppers will give your creepy cupcakes a suitably spooky finish – but is there a trick or treat inside your bakes?

● *£2.99 from www.gingerray.co.uk.*



For grown-up party petit fours, hand around these Hôtel Chocolat Choose Your Poison cocktail-inspired truffles with a shot of liqueur.

● *£10 from www.hotelchocolat.com.*



Snack-O-Lantern's cookie cutters are perfect for Halloween party baking; each set includes six stamps and a cutter.

● *£8.99 from www.pinksumo.com.*

fair trade

TIANA® organics

NATURE'S PUREST TREASURES®

The ONLY Range of Fair Trade Organic Coconut Superfoods

100% "FREE FROM" FOOD & BEAUTY range



MULTI AWARD WINNING RANGE

Two Great Products from TIANA... see the benefits



PREMIUM fair trade TIANA® organics No.1 IN THE UK COCONUT RANGE

Not for frying

Great for stir-frying

Raw Organic Coconut Goodness

- Heavenly delicious pure raw unsweetened coconut flesh
- Contains dietary fibre, protein, coconut oil, Vitamins B, C, E, folic acid & minerals: calcium, iron, potassium and zinc
- For desserts, baking, smoothies, stews or enjoy by spoon
- Due to high content of fibre & protein not suitable for frying
- Dilute with water to make coconut milk or cream
- 100% Pure, suitable for vegetarians & vegans

Raw Extra Virgin Coconut Oil

- Absolutely delicious raw extra virgin coconut oil
- First cold pressed below 40°C from fresh coconuts
- Highest content of Lauric, Capric & Caprilic Acids
- A natural food supplement for health & wellbeing
- Highest stability coconut oil for all cooking & baking
- Use as a skin moisturiser and hair conditioner
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From Holland & Barrett, all Good Independent Health Stores or online at www.tiana-coconut.com

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TURN THE PAGE TO MAKE A 'BARLOTTO' WITH YOUR WILD OR CULTIVATED MUSHROOMS, OR TRY THE FRITTATA ON PAGE 44.

Delicious in October

From the Halloween-bright flesh of pumpkins, the earthy flavour of wild mushrooms and the sweet promise of English apples and pears, the autumn harvest is perfectly suited to comfort cooking. The satisfying simmering of soups and stews, the patient stirring of risottos and chopping roots for roasting just suits the mood at this time of year. Slow food is the best kind, so pop a casserole or crumble in the oven and relax…

Our gardening editor Alice Whitehead goes foraging on page 78. >>

WE LOVE... MUSHROOMS

From chanterelles to morels, porcini to puffball, wild mushrooms are particularly prized during their short season, which lasts until the first frosts. They must always be thoroughly cleaned (dry brush, don't wash in water) and cooked before eating (never eat raw), but taste best when prepared simply.

Picking without experience or expert guidance, however, is risky, so you can always head to your local farmers' market, farm shop or even some supermarkets to pick up fabulous fungi.

Quick pasta Dry-fry chanterelles for a few minutes, then add butter or olive oil, fresh garlic and a dollop of cream. Season and serve on pasta.

Simple snack If you can find fresh porcini (also known as ceps), slice thickly and sauté with a drizzle of oil and fresh garlic. Pile on good quality toast – additional toppings that work well include chopped nuts, fresh parsley, hard goat's cheese and Parmesan-style shavings.

Storecupboard star Dried porcini are a great kitchen cupboard standby. Rehydrate and add sparingly to risottos, soups and stews to enrich the flavour.



Barley risotto with red wine and mushrooms

Swap rice for pearl barley to make this 'barlotto'. It can be cooked in advance and reheated, because unlike rice, barley doesn't go soggy with keeping.

Serves 4 | Prep 10 mins | Cook 45 mins

3 tbsp olive oil
175g pearl barley, washed and drained
1 small onion, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, finely chopped
500ml hot vegetable stock or water
1 tbsp light soy sauce
150ml red wine
300g fresh chanterelles (or other wild and cultivated mushrooms, such as porcini or portobellos)
75g unsalted butter
2 tbsp freshly chopped parsley
1 tbsp freshly chopped tarragon
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 Heat the oil in a large saucepan, then add the barley and stir until it starts to turn golden (not brown) – this will take about 5 minutes. Add the onion and garlic and continue frying for 5–10 minutes, until the barley starts to brown. Don't let it burn, but you want a good, toasted flavour.

2 Add the stock, soy sauce, red wine, salt and pepper. Bring to the boil, turn down the heat, part-cover with a lid, then simmer gently until nearly all the liquid has been absorbed – this should take at least 30 minutes. You don't need to stir it constantly.

3 Meanwhile, brush or scrape the mushrooms clean (slicing any bigger ones to size) and heat a frying pan until hot. Add two-thirds of the butter and all the mushrooms. Stir-fry over medium heat for 4–5 minutes, until lightly browned. Season with salt and pepper.

4 Add the stir-fried mushrooms to the barley and mix gently. Remove from the heat and cover with kitchen foil with a few holes pierced in it to let the barley swell and absorb all the liquid. Leave it in a warm place for 15 minutes.

5 To serve, put the risotto pan back on the heat and beat in the parsley, tarragon and the remaining butter. Stir well until hot and add salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately.

COOK'S TIP If you are making the risotto in advance, let it cool at the end of Step 4, reheating it for serving up to 24 hours later.

■ PER SERVING 440 cals, fat 25.5g, sat fat 11.5g, carbs 41g, sugars 2g, protein 6.5g, salt 2.4g, fibre 2.5g

Recipe adapted from *Risotto* by Maxine Clark (Ryland Peters & Small, £16.99). Photography by Martin Bridgdale.

SIMMER & STIR

READER OFFER

Vegetarian Living readers can buy *Risotto* for the special price of £11.99, including p&p, by calling 01256 302699 and quoting reference GLR EA9.

Your October larder

FRUIT Apples, blackberries, elderberries, figs, grapes, medlar, pears and quince

VEGETABLES Artichoke, beetroot, broccoli, butternut squash, celeriac, chicory, chillies, courgettes, fennel, garlic, horseradish, Jerusalem artichoke, kale, kohlrabi, leeks, marrow, parsnips, potatoes, pumpkin, runner beans, salsify, shallots, swede, sweetcorn, truffles (black and white), turnips and wild mushrooms

SALADS Celery, lettuce and salad leaves, radishes, rocket, tomatoes, watercress

GO FORAGING QUINCE

A perfectly ripe, yellow pear-shaped quince has a heavenly fragrance that will make you want to tuck straight in – but don't be tempted to try one raw, as it has a very bitter flavour!

These ancient fruits turn beautifully pink when cooked and can be added to apple and pear dishes, such as crumbles or fruit pies. You can slow-bake them with honey and spices like cardamom or cinnamon, and they also work well with a hint of citrus, such as orange (juice and segments) and a dash of orange blossom water. Serve with cream, Greek yogurt or ice cream for extra deliciousness.

In Spain, quinces are used to make membrillo, a quince jelly



which is traditionally served with manchego cheese. Try expert forager Christopher Robbins's recipe at **www.demuths.co.uk/rachels-blog/article/quince-jelly**. If you fancy foraging the city streets with Christopher looking for edible wild goodies, he's running a two-hour guided foraging walk in beautiful Bath on 8 October. You can book your place at **www.demuths.co.uk**.



Polenta and Parmesan parsnip fries

A great recipe to get out of the potato rut and encourage children to try the different root vegetables coming into season now.

Serves 4 as a side
Prep 25 mins | **Cook** 15 mins

500g parsnips
100g plain flour
2 free-range eggs
50ml whole milk
200g polenta
50g vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese, finely grated
vegetable oil
salt and black pepper
mayonnaise, for dipping

1 Scrub the parsnips well and pat dry thoroughly. Cut each parsnip in half crosswise to get two shorter pieces, then halve lengthwise. If the pieces are thick, cut into quarters lengthwise (the top halves will probably need to be quartered but not the bottoms).
2 Put the flour on a small plate. Combine the eggs and milk in a small bowl, whisk and set aside. Combine the polenta, Parmesan-style cheese and a good pinch of salt and pepper on a plate, mix well and set aside.
3 Bring a large pot of water to the boil, then add the parsnips and cook until just tender but not completely soft. Test by inserting the tip of a knife; you should still get some resistance. Time depends on size, but about 5 minutes. Drain.
4 Coat the parsnip slices in the flour, then dip in the egg mixture and transfer immediately to the polenta mix and coat all over. Set aside and continue until all the pieces of parsnip are coated.
5 Fill a large saucepan one-third full with the oil or, if using a deep-fat fryer, follow the manufacturer's instructions. Heat the oil to 190C or until a cube of bread browns in 30 seconds.
6 Working in batches, use tongs or a large wire mesh skimmer and transfer the parsnips to the hot oil carefully. Fry until golden, 3–5 minutes. Remove and drain on paper towels. Repeat until all of the parsnips have been fried. Sprinkle with a bit more salt and serve with mayonnaise.

■ PER SERVING 771 cals, fat 44g, sat fat 9g, carbs 74g, sugars 9.5g, protein 19.5g, salt 1.8g, fibre 10g

Recipe adapted from *Fries* by Laura Washburn (Ryland Peters & Small, £9.99). Photography by Steve Painter.



READER OFFER

CHIPS AHOY!

Vegetarian Living readers can buy *Fries* for the special price of £7.99, including p&p, by calling 01256 302699 and quoting reference GLR EB3.

TRINE HAHNEMANN'S

Scandinavian pear and nut tart

I subscribe to an organic box scheme that supplies fruit and vegetables every week. The best thing about it is that you have to use whatever they give to you; it's great for stretching your creativity in the kitchen. In the autumn, that means a lot of pears and apples. This tart is perfect with some extra-ripe pears. Sometimes I mix in some apples as well, if that is what's left in the box.

Serves 8 | Prep 30 mins + chilling
Cook 45 mins

For the pastry:
150g plain flour, plus more to dust
100g wholegrain spelt flour
½ tsp salt
2 tbsp caster sugar
100g cold butter, chopped
1 large free-range egg, lightly beaten

For the filling:
100g marzipan, coarsely grated (use a variety that is 60% almonds; see below for homemade marzipan)
1 vanilla pod
100g caster sugar
100g soft butter
3–4 ripe pears
25g walnuts, finely chopped (optional)

1 Sift the flours with the salt into a bowl. Stir in the sugar. Rub in the butter with your fingers until the mixture resembles crumbs. Mix in the egg without over-working the pastry. Wrap in cling film and chill for at least 30 minutes.
2 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4.
3 Roll the pastry out on a floured work surface until it is large enough to line a 28cm diameter tart tin, then use it to line the tin. Trim off the excess pastry from the sides of the tin with a knife. Cover it with baking parchment, pressing it carefully into the sides, then fill with dried beans. Bake for 15 minutes. Remove the beans and baking parchment and allow the pastry to cool a little.
4 Meanwhile, make the filling. Tip the marzipan into a bowl. Split the vanilla pod in half lengthways and scrape out the seeds with the tip of a sharp knife. Carefully mix the marzipan, vanilla seeds and sugar together. Now add the butter little by little, stirring very well so there are no lumps in the mixture, or use your hands.
5 Quarter and core the pears, and cut them into thin slices.
6 Spread the marzipan filling into the pastry case, then arrange the pear slices in overlapping circles on top, gently pressing them into the filling. Sprinkle evenly with the walnuts (if using).
7 Bake in the oven for about 30 minutes. Serve warm or cold with crème fraîche.

■ PER SERVING 494 cals, fat 27g, sat fat 14.5g, carbs 57g, sugars 34g, protein 6.5g, salt 0.9g, fibre 5g

Recipe adapted from *Scandinavian Baking* by Trine Hahnemann (Quadrille, £25). Photography by Columbus Leth.



Make your own marzipan V

It is easy to make your own marzipan, but of course expensive. It's worth it though, as it tastes much better than the shop-bought stuff.

Makes 600g marzipan

500g almonds (either skin on, or blanched for pure white marzipan)
100g icing sugar, plus more to dust

Whizz the almonds in a food processor until they become a paste. Add the icing sugar, whizz again, then add 50ml water and whizz for a final time. Knead it on a work surface dusted with icing sugar. Now it is ready to be used. It will keep for up to 2 weeks, wrapped in cling film in the refrigerator.









GROWING TALES

Dale Dennehy, Dyrham Park

INTERVIEW: LINDSEY HARRAD

With the status of the finest Champagne, perry was revered by the Romans and has a long and distinguished history as a high-status tipple. 'Today, perry enthusiasts cringe when people call it cider,' laughs Dale Dennehy, garden and park manager at the National Trust's Dyrham Park. After working at Dyrham for the last 20 years, Dale knows a thing or two about perry pears, which have an established history on this beautiful Gloucestershire estate.

'If you look at a map of 1679, you'll see there were orchards everywhere around this site, just like on all the large estates,' says Dale. 'Gloucestershire, along with Worcestershire and Herefordshire, are the counties that have traditionally been at the centre of fruit growing in the UK, and perry pears in particular. So there were pear and apple orchards here and the estate had a large brew house and made its own cider. The decision was taken some years ago to bring back the perry pears at Dyrham to renew the link to "old Gloucestershire" again, and tell the story of perry pears on this site.'

Historically, pears and other fruit trees were grown here for both aesthetic and practical reasons. 'In the pre-Victorian period the selection and availability of plants was very small, as it was the Victorian plant hunters who went off on their travels and brought home lots of wonderful species,' says Dale. 'Before that, fruit was seen as something that could be both attractive and productive.'

Dyrham's formal water garden was noted as the most elaborate of its type in England in 1718, second only to Chatsworth. 'Back then, garden design was all about man controlling nature, and fruit played a big part in the garden displays, rather than decorative flowers such as roses, like you might find today. We have been redesigning the garden over the last 10 years and trying to put back elements of that earlier garden. We've got trees from the Victorian period that we are keeping, such as mulberry, but we've been planting things like perry pears, espalier pears and quince walks, plus standard gooseberries – all things that were used back in the 17th and 18th centuries to add formality to the gardens.'

The perry-making revival has reconnected Dyrham with its past, and also provided a new way to attract modern visitors, who are keen to sample the estate's signature product. 'We've been propagating from some of our old pear trees that date back over 200 years to re-stock our old orchards, and we've been producing our own perry that's sold in the shop and the tea room. We want people to see Dyrham as a place of active food production, with products that are authentic to the history of the site.'

A few years ago Dale came up with the idea of holding a perry weekend to raise awareness of this under-rated fruit. 'There were lots of apple events, but no one was doing anything with pears back then. We do pear harvesting and tasting, and we've got an old cider press so people can bring their own pears to make juice to drink or take home, which children love because it's a bit messy and produces an immediate result. Plus we also run lots of pear-related activities and crafts, we've got Morris Men coming and the tea room will be serving a pear-themed menu all weekend. It's always great fun!'

● *This year's Perry Pear Weekend takes place on 3–4 October. Find out more at* **www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dyrham-park**.

How to serve perry

Dale recommends enjoying sparkling perry chilled with ice in the summer – it's rather like a sparkling wine. In winter, make mulled still perry (the same spices you'd use for mulled wine) and serve warm for a seasonal treat – it's perfect for Christmas too.

'We've been propagating from some of our old pear trees that date back over 200 years to re-stock our old orchards'



Taste not waste



Veggie blogger Kate Hackworthy believes in tackling food waste through root to leaf eating, and loves to create delicious recipes to save leftovers from the compost heap.

We throw away a lot of food, don't we? Whether it's from food production, over-buying in the shops, poor storage or allotment gluts, far too much seems to end up hitting the bin.

At home I'm always looking for ways to make the most of the food I have. Meal planning and regularly reviewing the contents of the fridge and cupboards helps a lot to reduce food waste, but I also enjoy experimenting with using up the parts of plants that are often discarded.

Often, perfectly edible food ends up being thrown away or composted, but with a little creativity and know-how we can make meals out of food that would otherwise be unused. From pickling watermelon rinds to roasting cauliflower leaves with olive oil and herbs, keeping kitchen scraps from the scrapheap feels virtuous, plus it saves not only money but also precious resources.

Here are some ideas for getting the most out of those lovely vibrant purple beetroots that are in abundance now. We all know about the great ways to eat the root: roasted slowly until caramelised, grated raw into a bright coleslaw and, of course, pickled. But there's a lot more to beetroot, from root to leaf.

Quick-pickled rosemary beetroot stems V

Quick-pickling retains the crunchy bite of these vibrant stems. They're lovely eaten on their own, as a side dish or served on salad.

stems from 8 beetroots (about 100g), washed and chopped into 2.5cm lengths
75ml apple cider vinegar
75ml water
2 tsp sugar or honey
1 sprig of rosemary, chopped
½ tsp salt
pinch of black pepper

Put the beet stems in a bowl or jar. In a pan, add the vinegar, water, sugar or honey, rosemary, salt and pepper and bring to the boil. Stir to dissolve the sugar. Pour the hot liquid over the beetroot stems to cover. Let stand for at least 30 minutes.

COOK'S TIP Best eaten within 2 weeks.

govegan

V For a vegan pickle, make sure you sweeten with sugar, not honey.

Beetroot leaves with chilli and coconut milk V

Traditionally, this Caribbean side dish is made with callaloo leaves, but beetroot leaves, as well as Swiss chard and spinach, make an excellent substitution. It's lovely served with rice and perhaps also jerk-spiced roasted cauliflower florets.

Serves 3 as a side dish
Prep 5 mins | Cook 15 mins

100g beetroot leaves (2 large handfuls)
1 tbsp olive oil
½ onion, diced
1 clove garlic, finely chopped
½ fresh red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped (add more to taste)
1 tsp fresh thyme leaves
½ can coconut milk, stirred
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper

1 Steam or boil the beet leaves for a few minutes or until soft and wilted. Drain and run under cold water. Squeeze out any excess water using your hands, then chop the leaves.
2 In a large frying pan, heat the oil over a low–medium heat, then cook the onion and garlic until soft and translucent, stirring often. Add the chopped chilli and thyme, and cook for a further minute.
3 Add the beetroot leaves and coconut milk and simmer on a medium heat for 5 minutes, until reduced slightly. Season and serve.

■ PER SERVING 217 cals, fat 20g, sat fat 10.5g, carbs 6g, sugars 5.5g, protein 3g, salt 0.8g, fibre 2g

SOS
SAVE OUR SCRAPS

KALE
Don't throw away those woody stems, they can be turned into pesto or chopped up and sautéed with garlic, onion and herbs as a quick side dish.

APPLE
Peelings can be frozen and used later in smoothies or to add flavour to porridge, cakes or soups.

VEG PEELINGS
Keep any peelings in the freezer so that you can quickly make a batch of fresh stock with a variety of vegetable flavours. I like to keep a large jar in the fridge that I can keep topping up until I need it. Just ensure you scrub the vegetables well before peeling.



ABOUT KATE
Kate Hackworthy is a food writer and recipe developer who blogs at **www.veggiedesserts.co.uk**. Her creative vegetable desserts have frequently appeared in *The Guardian* and she was Jamie Oliver's Food Blog of the Month. Follow Kate on Twitter: @veggie_desserts, Facebook: VeggieDessertsBlog and Instagram: @kateveggiedesserts.



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Join the Squash club

Professional chef and cookery school tutor Rachel Demuth transforms her favourite onion squash into three globally inspired dishes that will bring zingy flavours and vibrant colours to your autumn table.

No other ingredient heralds the arrival of autumn more vividly than colourful squash and pumpkins. It's hard to beat the beautiful glow of the flesh and the strange shapes of the many varieties available.

I find it fascinating to take one vegetable and cook it in different ways, using a variety of flavours from all over the world to achieve completely different and exciting results. This month I have chosen my favourite onion squash and roasted it as a filling for Turkish fatayer, cooked it with black beans for a robust Brazilian stew and also used it as a base for a fragrant Vietnamese coconut curry.

Squash and pumpkins are varieties of the *Cucurbita* family and divide into two types: summer and winter. The skin of summer varieties, such as courgette, is thin and will not store, while winter squash have a hard skin and will store for months in a cool dark place, so although they are harvested from September, they can be used well into the following year.

Now is the time for winter squash to start taking centre stage in your kitchen. If you've been growing your own – and you need to have plenty of space for this as they can rampage all over your garden and prefer rich, fertile ground with lots of compost – make sure you pick the squash when the leaves have begun to die down, as then they will be fully ripe.

When looking to buy squash, farmers' markets will offer the widest choice of varieties during the season, so why not try something new rather than the ubiquitous butternut? Whichever variety you like the look of, choose ones that are not too big and are firm to the touch. Out of season, supermarkets sell butternut squash all year round and will often stock a selection of other types of squash in the autumn too.

Among my preferred varieties is the onion squash, which is shaped liked a giant onion and has fluorescent orange skin with bright orange flesh. I also like 'Crown Prince', which is pale blue/green and shaped like a flying saucer with paler orange flesh; the kabocha, which is smaller, knobbly and dark green with pale green stripes and dense sweet orange flesh; and the wonderfully named 'Turk's Turban', which is also the most exotic looking!

Large pumpkins look fabulous but tend to be watery and don't have much flavour, so keep these for Halloween lanterns.

As a general rule, it is better to roast squash than boil it, as roasting intensifies the flavour. You can also add squash to stews and curries as it takes up the strong spices really well. But try squash raw too; it's really delicious and if you're a fan of spiralising, it will work a treat and looks beautiful in salads.

ABOUT RACHEL



Chef-proprietor of the award-winning Demuths restaurant in Bath for 25 years, Rachel is now dedicated to running the Demuths Vegetarian Cookery School, which offers a range of themed workshops, guest chef events, cookery holidays in France and Italy, and the Demuths Vegetarian and Vegan Diplomas for professional chefs and keen cooks. As a well-travelled foodie, Rachel loves to combine her passion for global cuisine with the best of locally grown produce.
www.demuths.co.uk

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BRAZILIAN SQUASH AND BLACK BEAN STEW

© ROB WICKS/EAT PICTURES

Brazilian squash and black bean stew

In this recipe the squash is enhanced with spices, hot red chilli and lime juice and goes wonderfully with black beans and sweetcorn. Serve with quinoa for a nutritious supper.

Serves 4 | Prep 30 mins | Cook 35 mins

2 tbsp sunflower oil
1 onion, chopped
1 tbsp cumin seeds, dry-fried and ground
1 tbsp coriander seeds, dry-fried and ground
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
1 red pepper, deseeded and chopped into chunks
1 tbsp fresh thyme leaves
1 tsp chilli flakes
500g squash, chopped into 5cm cubes
150–300ml vegetable stock
400g can black beans, drained and rinsed
100g sweetcorn kernels
1 tsp brown sugar
zest and juice of 1 lime
2 large ripe tomatoes, chopped
salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
handful of coriander leaves, chopped

1 Heat the sunflower oil in a large saucepan and add the onion. Fry for 10 minutes or until the onion is soft.
2 Stir in the ground cumin, coriander, garlic, chilli, pepper, thyme and chilli flakes and cook for a couple of minutes, adding a splash of water if the spices start to stick.
3 Add the squash and enough stock to cover the vegetables, then cook for 5 minutes.



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4 Stir in the black beans, sweetcorn, brown sugar, lime zest and juice, then simmer the stew for 10–15 minutes, or until the vegetables are just cooked.
5 Add the tomato and simmer for a further 5 minutes. Season and add extra lime juice and sugar, to your taste. Sprinkle with chopped coriander and serve with quinoa (see recipe, right).
COOK'S TIP If you want to use dried black beans you will need 100g dried beans, soaked overnight and cooked in water until soft.
■ PER SERVING 259 cals, fat 10.5g, sat fat 1.5g, carbs 29.5g, sugars 15g, protein 9g, salt 2g, fibre 9.5g

HOW TO...
Prepare squash

Hard skins mean winter squash are not so easy to peel, so it's easier to roast them with the skin on and then scoop out the soft flesh when cooked. Or simply cut into slices and roast with the skin on, as the roasted skin is surprisingly tender and delicious. One exception is butternut squash, which does have a thin enough skin to peel with a sharp peeler.

Be very careful when you slice squash as the skin can be very hard to cut through – use a large knife on a solid chopping board. First cut each squash in half and slice off the stem, then scoop out the seeds and cut crescent moon-shaped slices.

SIMPLE QUINOA

A tiny golden seed that comes from the Andes, quinoa has a higher protein content than rice and makes a great gluten-free alternative to couscous or bulgur wheat. Serve this with the Brazilian squash and black bean stew, as a salad with nuts and seeds, or warm with roasted vegetables.

1 tbsp sunflower oil
200g quinoa, rinsed
450ml vegetable stock
zest and juice of 1 lime
pinch of salt

1 Heat the oil in a pan and add the quinoa. Stir, coating the grains in oil, then cook for a minute.
2 Add the stock, lime juice and zest, plus a pinch of salt. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes, on the lowest possible heat, until all the liquid has been absorbed and the quinoa grain has burst.
3 Turn the heat off, keeping the lid on, and allow to sit for a further 5 minutes. Fluff up with a fork and serve.
COOK'S TIP Red or black quinoa adds a nutty flavour to this dish; they take longer to cook and absorb more water than white quinoa, so cook them separately. To turn this into a meal, add some roasted squash and peppers, lots of chopped herbs and toasted seeds or nuts.



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Onion squash and coconut curry

I have used my favourite onion squash for this simple Vietnamese-style coconut curry. With the bright orange squash and yellow turmeric colouring the coconut milk, this makes a stunning-looking dish which is very quick and easy to make.

Serves 4 | Prep 15 mins | Cook 30 mins

1 tbsp sunflower oil
1 onion, sliced
1 tsp turmeric
8 cardamom pods, bruised
small piece of cinnamon bark
400ml coconut milk
150ml water
375g squash, cut into cubes
125g courgettes, cut into cubes
1 tbsp lemon juice
handful of fresh chopped coriander
salt and black pepper

For the garlic paste:
4 cloves garlic, chopped
1 red chilli, chopped
2.5cm piece of fresh ginger, peeled and chopped

1 Make the garlic paste by combining all the ingredients in a pestle and mortar or whizz in a mini-processor until well combined.
2 Heat the oil in a large heavy-bottomed pan and cook the onion until golden. Add the garlic paste, cooking until fragrant, then stir in the turmeric, cardamom and cinnamon, frying for 1 minute.
3 Pour in the coconut milk and water, stir well and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Add the squash and simmer for 15 minutes. Then add the courgette and simmer until just tender.
4 Stir through the lemon juice and fresh coriander, and taste for seasoning. Serve with fragrant jasmine rice.
■ PER SERVING 312 cals, fat 27.5g, sat fat 15.5g, carbs 11g, sugars 9g, protein 5g, salt 1.1g, fibre 2.5g

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ONION SQUASH AND COCONUT CURRY

Turkish fatayer

These Turkish pastries are made with a very light puffy yogurt pastry and are best eaten straight from the oven. They are one of the most popular pastries we make at the cookery school, as the pastry is so forgiving to make. The squash filling is spiced up with Aleppo pepper, my new favourite flavour enhancer.

Makes 15 | Prep 30 mins | Cook 25 mins

For the pastry:
150ml plain yogurt
1 tbsp olive oil
1 free-range egg
100g butter, melted
280g plain white or brown flour, or a mix
¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda
pinch of salt

For the filling:
250g squash
1 tbsp olive oil
salt and freshly ground black pepper
200g vegetarian feta, crumbled
½ tsp Aleppo pepper
1 free-range egg, beaten
sesame seeds, to sprinkle

1 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4.
2 To make the pastry, whisk together the yogurt, oil and egg in a large bowl, add the melted butter and whisk again. Sieve in the flour with the bicarbonate of soda and the salt. Mix together to make a soft, smooth dough-like pastry. If it is too sticky, add a little more flour.
3 To make the filling, mix the squash with a little oil, salt and pepper and roast in the oven until soft. When cool, stir in the feta, Aleppo pepper and half the beaten egg, and season with black pepper.
4 To construct the fatayer, divide the pastry into 12 portions and roll each one into a ball about the size of a golf ball. On a floured surface, roll out each ball into a circle about 12cm in diameter.
5 Divide the filling into 12 and place a portion in the middle of each pastry circle. Dampen the edges with water and bring the sides of each pastry circle together to form a three-sided triangular pyramid. Press the edges together, brush the tops with the remaining beaten egg, and sprinkle with sesame seeds.
6 Place the pastries on a lined baking sheet and cook in the oven for 25 minutes or until crisp and golden. Best eaten warm, with a tahini dip (see recipe, right).


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TURKISH FATAYER
© ROB WICKS/EAT PICTURES

COOK'S TIP You can make a dairy-free version by omitting the feta and using soya yogurt and margarine in the pastry. The filling is also delicious as a dip, if you haven't got time to make the fatayer.

■ PER PASTRY 190 cals, fat 11.5g, sat fat 6g, carbs 16g, sugars 1.5g, protein 5.5g, salt 1.2g, fibre 1.5g

VARIATIONS

Try different fillings to suit the season: peas, broad beans, spring onion, grated courgettes in the summer; a spicy sweet potato, chickpea, red pepper and chilli filling in winter.

ALEPPO PEPPER is a Turkish dried and flaked chilli pepper, not very hot, with a sweet, slightly smoky tomato-like flavour. Use instead of paprika and black pepper, to add colour and a little kick of spicy heat.

TAHINI DIP V

150ml light tahini
pinch of cayenne
juice of 1 lemon
3–5 tbsp water, as needed
salt and freshly ground black pepper

Mix the tahini with the cayenne and lemon juice. At this point the mixture is a dense, thick paste. Add a little water, tablespoon by tablespoon, until the mixture is smooth and creamy. Add salt and pepper to taste.

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There's a fermenting revival underway in the culinary world, and fans of this traditional preserving method say it enhances the taste and nutritional content of a wide variety of foods. Cookery writer Charlotte Pike's new book reveals just how easy and rewarding this technique is to try at home.

INTERVIEW: LINDSEY HARRAD



PHOTOGRAPHY: TARA FISHER

Go fermented!

Chocolate, beer, wine, coffee, yogurt and cheese are just some of the many everyday food and drinks we consume regularly that are, in fact, fermented. Although fermented foods can be found in almost every global cuisine, traditionally the concept hasn't been popular in the UK, but this is changing as fermenting techniques are becoming hugely fashionable, with fans extolling the virtues of both the flavour of fermented foods and the nutritional value.

What is fermenting?

'There is so much more to fermentation than we realise in the UK,' says food writer Charlotte Pike, author of a new cookbook on the technique. 'If you think of a fermented food your first thought may be of something like sauerkraut, which most people are familiar with but are not sure they actually like. I found trying fermented foods for the first time an incredible experience; they were so delicious and they also offer numerous health benefits which is a real bonus.'

Thanks to those well-known yogurt adverts, most of us are familiar with the idea of consuming 'healthy bacteria'. Charlotte explains that fermentation is a natural way of preserving food while also enhancing its nutritional content, and simply allows good bacteria or yeast to ferment the natural sugars and carbohydrates in foods into alcohol and organic acids. All kinds of food and drink can be fermented – from familiar products such as yogurt, to fruit, beans, pulses and even tea.

But if fermenting is so good for us, why has it fallen out of favour? Charlotte believes it's symptomatic of Western food culture, as the industrialisation and homogenisation of food production has meant fermentation has died out. 'Fermented foods are a little more unpredictable because they are wild and living, so they are harder to produce in large quantities in a really consistent manner,' says Charlotte. 'Retailers also want to sell food and drink that has been pasteurised for a longer shelf life, and if you pasteurise fermented food or drink then it kills the beneficial bacteria too. But in fact it is perfectly acceptable to sell raw and wild fermented foods, as long as they've been produced properly.'

Preserving flavours

A former investment banker in the City, Charlotte starting experimenting and cooking her own free-from foods 12 years ago for her partner Tony, driven by the poor availability and quality of free-from foods on the market at that time. 'My recipes proved so popular that I began producing them professionally, so what started out as a hobby went on to become a business,' she says. 'I set up an award-winning free-from bakery called Go Free Foods (www.gofreefoods.co.uk), and then started blogging and writing. *Fermented* is my fourth book.'

After fully committing to a career in food, Charlotte decided to take professional training at Ballymaloe Cookery School in Ireland to improve her technical skills. 'I had heard about fermentation and tried a few things before, but the course at Ballymaloe was a real eye-opener for me.'

For those who try fermented foods such as kimchi (Korean fermented vegetables), kombucha (a fermented sweet tea drink), sourdough bread or labneh yogurt cheese, it can be something of a flavour revelation. 'They really shake up the senses and the taste buds,' says Charlotte. 'I'm not a scientist, I'm a cook, and what I discovered is that you actually don't need to invest in much equipment or time to start fermenting. It's all quite straightforward.

'I've done a huge amount of experimentation and when I discovered that some products were wildly expensive or time-consuming to make, or just taste better when bought from an artisan specialist producer, then I recommend doing that instead,' she says. 'Chocolate is one example – it's really not worth the effort. But making your own labneh and yogurt [see recipes, below] is really easy, as is making your own fermented drinks, which are delicious and nutritious. I've even cooked an entire dinner party using 19 fermented recipes from my book and it was a huge hit!'

● *Follow Charlotte's blog at* **www.charlotteskitchendiary.com**.


WHOLE MILK YOGURT

HOW TO MAKE HOMEMADE LABNEH

START WITH...

Whole milk yogurt

Making your own yogurt is very straightforward and tremendously satisfying. The milk powder thickens the yogurt, and I think it tastes better with it included. If you prefer a creamier yogurt still, you can substitute 100ml of the milk with single cream.

Makes approx. 500ml

2 heaped tbsp organic live yogurt
500ml organic whole milk
3 tbsp milk powder

1 It's vital that everything is spotlessly clean when making yogurt. To ensure your equipment is in perfect condition, place the whisk and metal spoon inside a large glass or ceramic mixing bowl and fill it to the brim with boiling water before use. Dip the thermometer tip in, too. Add boiling water to the Thermos flask, as well. Pour the water away and dry the equipment using a clean tea towel or kitchen paper before using.
2 Place the yogurt in the clean mixing bowl and allow it to come up to room temperature, about 20–30 minutes.
3 Pour the milk into a clean saucepan and heat very gently over a very low heat until it reaches exactly 46C – don't let it get any warmer than this or it will kill the live cultures in the yogurt when the two are combined. Remove the pan from the heat, sprinkle the milk powder over the surface and whisk it in thoroughly. Carefully pour the warm milk over the yogurt in the bowl and stir well with a metal spoon.
4 Pour the yogurt into the Thermos flask. Screw on the lid and set aside on the kitchen work surface overnight.
5 By morning, your milk should have thickened and turned into yogurt. Decant it into jars or a Tupperware container, cover with cling film or a lid and store in the fridge. Eat within 5 days.

ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT

You will need a digital thermometer and a 1-litre Thermos flask, both spotlessly clean.

USE IT TO MAKE...

Savoury labneh

Labneh is a staple of the Middle East. It is made by suspending yogurt in a muslin bag to allow the whey to drip out and leave a thick and creamy yogurt cheese, which is called labneh. This version can be enjoyed on its own or with a selection of mezze, and it is often eaten for breakfast with raw vegetables and flatbreads.

Makes 600g

900ml or 1kg tub of organic whole milk, Greek or homemade whole milk yogurt (see recipe, left)
1 tbsp sea salt

1 Place the yogurt in a mixing bowl and beat in the salt.
2 Set a sieve over a large mixing bowl. Drape a large muslin cloth over the surface, so that the base of the sieve is fully lined and the sides of the muslin hang down over the sides of the bowl.
3 Spoon the yogurt into the centre of the muslin, gather up the sides and tie them tightly with string just above the yogurt. Leave the lengths of string long to tie it up.
4 Suspend the muslin bag over the mixing bowl by tying it in a position where it can hang and the whey can drip into the bowl. I do this at home by tying the muslin bag on to a cupboard handle over the work surface. Some people like to tie it to a tap and sit the bowl in the sink below. You can even use a jelly bag attached to a strainer stand. Set aside in a cool place overnight, during which time the whey will drip through the muslin.
5 The contents of the muslin bag is your labneh. In the morning, tip the labneh into a clean earthenware or glass bowl, cover with


SAVOURY LABNEH

cling film and set aside in the fridge until needed. (It is helpful to weigh how much labneh you have made at this point, so that you can make up any recipes accordingly.) The labneh will keep well in the fridge for up to 3 days.

THRIFTY TIP Do keep the whey: it can be used in sourdough, and is also good added to water to make up the required quantity of liquid needed for pizza dough.

ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT

Muslin is essential for making labneh. It is widely available from cookshops and online. You could use a pure cotton tea towel or cloth as an alternative. Just make sure it's really clean before using: wash on a high temperature (60C+) and dry thoroughly before use.

SWEET LABNEH

To make a sweet version, omit the salt and use Greek yogurt for a very thick, creamy result.



SEE OUR TOAST TOPPER IDEA ON PAGE 82.

Preserved labneh with chilli, lemon, thyme and olive oil

Labneh can be preserved for up to three months by covering it in oil – but it must be completely submerged at all times. Rolling labneh into balls and coating them with an aromatic combination of flavours is not only delicious, but a great way to make your labneh last. What's particularly nice is that you can scoop out as many or as few balls as you like, as and when you want to use them. They're gorgeous served in a bowl as part of a mezze selection, or spread on a flatbread.

600g savoury labneh, drained weight
6 heaped tsp chilli flakes
6 heaped tsp chopped thyme leaves
zest of 4 unwaxed lemons, finely grated (ideally using a Microplane grater)
approx. 750ml extra-virgin olive oil

1 Put the labneh in a large mixing bowl. Combine the chilli flakes, thyme and lemon zest on a large plate.

2 Pinch off a little piece of labneh about the size of a walnut and shape it into a ball. Roll it in the herb and spice mixture so it is well coated and place in the bottom of a sterilised 1-litre glass Le-Parfait-style jar with a rubber seal. Repeat with the rest of the mixture.

3 Top up the jar with extra-virgin olive oil, ensuring that all of the labneh balls are completely submerged, and fasten the lid.

4 The labneh balls can be eaten immediately. Otherwise, transfer the jar to a cool, dark place, where the labneh balls will keep for up to 3 months. They can be kept in the fridge, but the olive oil will solidify. Once opened, use within 2 weeks.

THRIFTY TIP Once you have used up all of the labneh balls you can use the flavoured oil as a salad dressing or for cooking, so it won't go to waste.



COURGETTE, LABNEH
AND THYME TART

Courgette, labneh and thyme tart

This tart is incredibly easy to make and looks so elegant. It's delicious served with a salad as a main meal, or you could wrap a slice in foil to take out with you as a packed lunch.

Serves 6 | Prep 10 mins
Cook 22 mins

375g pack ready-rolled puff pastry
4 tbsp savoury labneh
1 tbsp milk or 1 free-range egg, beaten
2 large or 6 baby courgettes, ends trimmed and sliced at an angle, about 5mm thick
50g vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese, finely grated
1 tbsp thyme leaves
sea salt and black pepper

1 Preheat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6.
2 Unroll the puff pastry on to a large baking tray. Take a sharp knife and score a border around the edge of the pastry, running roughly 2.5cm parallel to the sides.
3 Spread the labneh over the middle of the pastry, taking it up to, but not over, the pastry border. Brush the border with a little milk or beaten egg, and season the labneh all over with salt and pepper.
4 Now arrange the courgette slices over the labneh, ensuring the labneh is covered. Sprinkle the Parmesan-style cheese evenly over the surface and scatter over some thyme leaves.
5 Bake for 18–22 minutes, by which time the border should have puffed up nicely and the topping will be golden brown. Serve immediately while still hot, but it is good cold on the following day.

■ PER SERVING 382 cals, fat 27g, sat fat 11.5g, carbs 25.5g, sugars 4g, protein 10g, salt 2.2g, fibre 1.5g

Labneh cheesecake with honey

As cheesecakes go, this one is really rather virtuous and is a lovely dessert to make for a gathering. It's made using natural, nutritious ingredients, and is free from wheat, gluten and refined sugar. Using labneh in the cheesecake mixture gives a slightly more acidic finish, not too dissimilar from a sharp cream cheese.



LABNEH CHEESECAKE WITH HONEY

Serves 12 | Prep 15 mins + setting

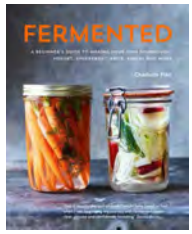
For the base:
375g nuts of your choice, such as cashew nuts, or a mixture of cashew, almonds and walnuts
150g pitted dates
75g coconut oil
a few drops of vanilla extract

For the filling:
550g sweet labneh, drained weight
1 tsp vanilla extract
75g raw runny honey, plus extra to drizzle

1 Line the base and sides of a 25cm round springform cake tin with non-stick baking parchment.
2 To make the cheesecake base, place the nuts and dates in a food processor and blitz until the nuts form small chunks. Add the coconut oil and vanilla extract and blitz briefly again, just until the mixture starts to bind together.
3 Tip the mixture into the prepared tin and press down well with the flat of your hand to form an even layer. Cover with cling film and transfer to the fridge to firm up while you make the cheesecake filling.
4 To make the filling, combine the labneh, vanilla extract and honey in a large mixing bowl and beat together until evenly blended. Spread the mixture over the base and level the surface with a palette knife.
5 Cover the surface loosely with foil and transfer to the fridge to set for a minimum of 8 hours.
6 When you are ready to serve, remove the tin and transfer the cheesecake to a serving plate. Drizzle some honey over the top and cut into slices.

COOK'S TIP This is best eaten within 3 days.

■ PER SERVING 382 cals, fat 28g, sat fat 12g, carbs 23g, sugars 19g, protein 10g, salt 1g, fibre 2g



Recipes adapted from *Fermented* by Charlotte Pike (Kyle Books, £16.99). Photography by Tara Fisher.





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PRESERVING BRITAIN

As the Women's Institute celebrates its centenary, Wendy Johnson takes a look at how its members have helped to shape British food and farming over the last 100 years.

On 16 September 1915, more than 30 women filed into the village hall in Llanfairpwll on Anglesey and began to change the nation forever. It was the first meeting of the Women's Institute in Britain and these rural Welsh women were its founder members. They couldn't have known that the WI would still be going strong a century later and would be the biggest voluntary women's organisation in the country with an unrivalled, no-nonsense reputation for rolling up its sleeves and getting the job done.



Marylyn Haines-Evans, chair of the WI Public Affairs Committee

Over the last 100 years the WI has become known for its tireless and tenacious campaigning for a better Britain. Its members have crusaded on issues as diverse as litter – they founded Keep Britain Tidy in 1954 – breast screening, equal pay for women and the public smoking ban, but perhaps their most defining role has been as bastions of the sustainable British food scene.

Keep calm and carry on

In fact, it was the urgent need for sustainable produce during the First World War that led to the WI's very existence. 'While the men were away on the front line it was down to the women to pull together and help feed the nation,' explains Marylyn Haines-Evans, chair of the WI Public Affairs Committee, who refers to the 213,000 members that exist across the country today as an 'army' of strong-willed women.

'The WI brought countrywomen together and organised them to grow and preserve produce. Our members have exhibited this "can do" attitude ever since, and have always taken a practical approach to problems.'

Canning, bottling and pickling fruit and vegetables became critical to the war effort, as did jam making, a skill that ultimately led to the WI's enduring 'Jam and Jerusalem' reputation. During the Second World War the WI rallied again, setting up canteens for the troops, digging for victory and preserving almost 12 million pounds of fruit that might otherwise have spoiled.

'We're not a force to be ignored,' continues Marylyn. 'We've earned the right to stand up and say exactly how it is thanks to those strong, proactive women who founded the organisation all those years ago.'

Campaigning for rural life

There's no doubt that the WI has always been ahead of its time, identifying and championing the causes that most affect us and our environment. It campaigned against pollution in our seas as far back as the 1920s, fought against toxic chemicals in agriculture in 1960 and founded the Fairtrade Foundation along with Oxfam, Christian Aid and others in 1992, encouraging members to buy Fairtrade products and taking it from marginal to mainstream.



© NFWI



© NFWI

The WI's SOS for Honeybees campaign



The organisation's origins as a network of countrywomen whose lives revolved around agriculture and were acutely attuned to the landscape and seasons are still evident throughout the modern WI, largely thanks to those early members passing their skills and values down through the generations. Marylyn's story is a perfect illustration. She grew up on a farm, still farms today in rural West Wales and joined her local WI 41 years ago when she was just 17. 'I joined because my grandmother and mother were both members. My 22-year-old daughter Angharad has joined now too, so four generations of women in our family have shared the experience.'

Marylyn was part of the WI's push to safeguard the future of Britain's crisis-stricken dairy industry back in 2007, alongside the Farmers Union of Wales and the National Farmers Union. A series of milk debates involving 15,000 people across the



© JACK BOULTON @ CATSNEEZE AND MANCHESTER WI

THE WI NEEDS YOU

The WI's range of interests and activities spans everything from art appreciation to Zumba, so if you're interested in their campaigns or simply want to make new friends while learning to lindyhop, belly dance, brew beer, forage, knit, drum or draw, then seek out your local group. There are around 6,700 WIs across England and Wales (including groups on Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man), but if you can't find one close by then you could always get together with other local women and start your own. Find out more at **www.thewi.org.uk/become-a-member**.



© GEMMA DAWSON

Baking and preserving is still part of WI traditions

A hundred years of campaigning for environmental issues



© NFWI



© BEN LANGDON

BACK TO SCHOOL...

The WI is renowned for baking excellence, so there's nowhere better than the WI Cookery School based at Denman College in Oxfordshire for taking a masterclass on feather-light sponges or perfectly set jam. Residential and day courses are open to WI members and non-members alike.

As well as traditional baking, preserving and patisserie classes, the school teaches a variety of more exotic skills, like preparing street food from across the globe or transforming vegetables from the bottom of the fridge into tasty teatime bakes – a slice of tropical parsnip cake anyone? Browse and book at **www.denman.org.uk**.

country raised awareness of the challenges facing the industry.

'We were concerned about the discrepancy between the retail and farm gate prices of milk, but in the years since our campaign we've seen several retailers establish better relationships with the dairy farmers that supply them,' says Marylyn. 'Women hold a lot of purchasing power in their households and the WI are interested consumers. The impact of more than 200,000 members making informed decisions about what they buy, and perhaps even changing their buying habits because of something they've heard about at a meeting, is enough to make retailers and government sit up and listen.'

Plight of the bumble bee

Two years later, the WI launched a ground-breaking campaign that is still active today: SOS for Honeybees. Over the last six years it has played a vital role in getting the desperate plight of declining pollinators – creatures vital to food production – on to the public and political agenda. The Co-op and Friends of the Earth have since launched their own bee campaigns, but it was the WI that led the way.

'We wanted to secure funding to further scientific research into the accelerating decline of honeybees in the UK, but also, being the sort of women we are, to take practical action ourselves,' says Marylyn. 'We've hosted bee teas, developed bee-friendly recipes and transformed wasteland into pollinator-friendly gardens. Our Central Liverpool WI group even installed a beehive on the roof of their meeting place. At a political level we've contributed to the development of a National Pollinator Strategy, which is a huge step forward.'

Marylyn affectionately refers to Lord de Mauley, a former minister at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs that she met while campaigning with SOS for Honeybees, as the 'Bees Minister'. It is this lightness of touch and good humour (think *Calendar Girls*) that makes the WI such a friendly and popular institution.

'The success of the WI has been in its ability to nurture a sense of community and give women a supportive environment in which to



© NFWI ARCHIVES

Fruit and veg preserving to help the war effort in 1940

learn new skills or pass on old ones,' says Marylyn. 'Staying relevant, that's always been the key.'

A century on from those war-torn beginnings, the WI seems more relevant than ever. Britain's food scene has almost come full circle and the values that inspired the early WI are now falling back into favour, as we are once again becoming a nation of allotmenteers and home bakers, rediscovering a love of growing, preserving and cooking from scratch. Happily, the WI is experiencing something of a revival too, and with as many as 1,500 new members joining every week, the organisation looks certain to be leading us steadfastly through the next 100 years.

'The values that inspired the early WI are now falling back into favour, as we are once again becoming a nation of allotmenteers and home bakers'



A CLASSIC BAKE

The quintessential British cake, a good Victoria sponge still remains a staple of many WI meetings. Recipes for sponge cakes have appeared in WI publications going back to the earliest days of the movement, and reputations have been made and destroyed with cakes such as this one. The WI rules when judging are precise: only raspberry jam for the filling; a dusting of caster, *never* icing, sugar to finish; and a 20cm diameter. Good flavour should be at the heart of the cake's success, so use finest quality butter and fresh free-range eggs – if you have your own hens, even better.

The debate on what makes a perfect Victoria still rages on: butter or margarine, or a mix of both; to sift or double sift the flour; to add vanilla; is it a sandwich or a sponge? The simple format of this recipe shows just how assured WI cooks must have been. A WI recipe featured on the Hairy Bikers' BBC2 show in 2011, and our updated recipe is based on that one.



Recipe adapted from *The WI Cookbook* by Mary Gwynn (Ebury Press, £20). Photography by Jan Baldwin.

Victoria sandwich

Serves 6 | Prep 10 mins
Cook 30 mins

3 medium free-range eggs, weighed in their shells (around 170g)
the weight of the eggs in softened butter or soft margarine, caster sugar and self-raising flour
homemade or good-quality shop-bought raspberry jam, to fill

1 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Grease and base-line two 20cm sandwich tins with baking parchment.
2 Cream the butter/margarine and sugar together until very pale and fluffy. Beat the eggs then gradually add to the mixture, a tablespoonful at a time, beating well.
3 Sift the flour and gently fold into the mixture with a metal spoon. Divide the mixture equally between the prepared tins and level the surface, making a slight hollow in the centre to allow the cakes to rise.
4 Bake for 25–30 minutes on the same shelf in the oven, until well risen and golden. The cakes should have shrunk from the sides of the tin and spring back when touched.
5 Remove the cakes from the tins and turn on to a wire rack to cool. When cold, sandwich them together with jam and dust with caster sugar.

■ PER SERVING 529 cals, fat 26.5g, sat fat 16g, carbs 70g, sugars 48.5g, protein 6.5g, salt 0.6g, fibre 1g

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PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL DANNENBERG

EVERYDAY EATS

Escape the midweek meal rut with comforting, autumnal supper ideas from chefs Lorraine Pascale, Kaushy Patel and Liz Martin.

Lorraine Pascale cooks three favourite warming autumn dishes, proving hearty fare can be good for you too.

Suppers of substance



Soothing sag aloo soup V

This is not a traditional recipe and it is unusual to have this dish in the form of a soup, but I feel it really does work. If you want to make this in its regular form as a vegetable dish and not as a soup, then just put enough stock into the dish for the potatoes to cook in and soak up all of the liquid.

Serves 6 | Prep 15 mins | Cook 30 mins

1 tbsp olive oil
1½ tsp mustard seeds
1 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp ground coriander
1 tsp turmeric powder
1 large onion, very finely chopped
2cm piece of fresh ginger, peeled and very finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, very finely chopped
1 red chilli, deseeded for less heat if preferred, very finely chopped
1 litre good quality liquid vegetable stock
1 large waxy potato (about 450g), peeled and cut into 1cm dice
2 tomatoes, roughly diced
125g spinach leaves
½ can chickpeas, drained (optional)
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 Put the oil in a large pan over a low–medium heat. Add the mustard seeds, cumin, coriander and turmeric, and cook for a couple of minutes or until you start to smell the aromas of the spices.
2 Add the onion and ginger and cook for about 10 minutes, stirring regularly



SOOTHING SAG ALOO SOUP

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MYLES NEW


PORTOBELLO AND PORCINI MUSHROOM STOVETOP LASAGNE WITH PUY LENTILS AND SAGE

until softened. Add the garlic and chilli and cook for 1 minute more.

3 Gradually pour in the stock, scraping any sticky bits from the bottom of the pan as you go. Stir in the potato and tomato. Bring to the boil and then reduce to simmer for about 15 minutes or until the potatoes are tender.

4 Stir in the spinach, fistfuls at a time, until wilted. Add the chickpeas to heat them through, if using, then season the soup to taste and remove from the heat. Ladle into bowls and serve.

■ PER SERVING 143 cals, fat 3.5g, sat fat 0.5g, carbs 21g, sugars 3.5g, protein 6g, salt 1.9g, fibre 4.5g

Portobello and porcini mushroom stovetop lasagne with Puy lentils and sage

This is a novel way of making a lasagne on the hob. Porcini form the dried mushroom component in the filling, or try morels instead, if you can find them – they are some of the tastiest mushrooms on the market and can usually be found in good delis.

Serves 6 | **Prep** 20 mins | **Cook** 50 mins

For the tomato sauce:
1 tbsp olive oil
1 large onion, very finely chopped
1 handful of dried porcini mushrooms (about 15g)
2 cloves garlic, very finely chopped
5 sage leaves, finely chopped
½ tsp fennel seeds
good pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
300g portobello mushrooms, finely sliced
2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes
400g can Puy lentils, drained
1 carrot, very finely diced
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the white sauce:
250g ricotta
100g spinach, roughly chopped
50g vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese, finely grated
1 free-range egg yolk
good pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the other layers:
1 tbsp olive oil
10 regular, gluten-free or wholemeal lasagne sheets
125g ball of full- or half-fat mozzarella, drained and torn into small pieces
1 tbsp fresh thyme leaves or 2 tsp dried thyme
leaves from 1 bunch of fresh basil

1 First, prepare the tomato sauce. Heat the oil in a large sauté pan (mine is about 23cm wide) over a low–medium heat and cook the onion for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until really soft. Crunchy onion is nice in some dishes, but I feel it is not quite right for this one.

2 Meanwhile, put the dried mushrooms in a cup or small bowl and pour over enough boiling water to just cover them. Leave them aside to soften until needed.

3 Once the onion has softened, add the garlic, sage, fennel seeds and nutmeg and cook through for 1 minute. Then add the portobello

mushrooms and cook them down for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally until softened. About halfway through cooking, lots of liquid will come out of the mushrooms so turn up the heat and let it bubble off until almost gone. This helps intensify the mushroomy flavour.

4 Meanwhile, mix the ricotta, spinach, Parmesan-style cheese, egg yolk, nutmeg and salt and pepper in a medium bowl and set aside.

5 Once the portobello mushrooms are cooked, drain the liquid off the dried mushrooms, roughly chop them and throw them into the mushrooms in the pan. Reduce the heat to medium and add the chopped tomatoes, lentils, carrot and some salt and pepper and leave this to bubble away for 10 minutes or so, stirring from time to time so nothing catches on the bottom of the pan.

6 As this cooks, bring a large, wide pan of salted water to the boil to par-cook the lasagne sheets and add the oil. Drop five of the lasagne sheets in one by one (to help prevent sticking together) and cook for 3 minutes until floppy, but not entirely cooked through. Carefully remove and lay out in a single layer on a large sheet of parchment paper. Dab them dry with kitchen paper and cover with another layer of parchment paper to prevent them from drying out. Repeat with the second batch of lasagne sheets.

7 Once the tomato sauce is cooked, remove the pan from the heat and ladle half of it out into a bowl, leaving the remaining mixture in an even layer in the pan. Cover the sauce in the pan with five of the lasagne sheets arranged in a single layer, cutting them to fit where necessary. Spread half of the spinach ricotta mixture evenly over the pasta. Then repeat these layers once more.

8 Return to a low heat and cover with a lid (if you do not have a lid to fit, then just use a flat baking sheet). Bring to a simmer and then leave to bubble away for about 12–15 minutes, or until the pasta sheets have completely softened (check their tenderness by piercing the point of a knife through the centre). Halfway through the cooking time, scatter the mozzarella pieces and thyme over the top, re-cover and leave to finish cooking. Once cooked, scatter over the basil leaves and serve.

■ PER SERVING 419 cals, fat 19g, sat fat 9.5g, carbs 40g, sugars 9g, protein 21g, salt 2.8g, fibre 5.5g

Leek, aubergine and chickpea tagine with cashew nuts and apricots V

When I visited Morocco, couscous was the carb of choice to serve with the tagines, but for a quietly healthier and equally enjoyable alternative, buckwheat works excellently with this rich tagine. Buckwheat is a misnomer as this hardy grain-like pseudo-cereal is actually gluten-free. I found it online at three of the five big supermarkets, but if you are not having an easy job of finding it, then use some spelt or brown rice.

Serves 6 | Prep 15 mins | Cook 20 mins

2 tbsp ras el hanout
2 tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp ground cumin
1 tbsp olive oil or butter
2 leeks, outer layer removed, split down the length and finely sliced
3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
2cm piece of fresh ginger, peeled and very finely chopped
2 large aubergines, top and tailed and cut into bite-sized cubes
2 carrots, peeled and thinly sliced
2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes
250ml vegetable stock
400g can chickpeas, drained
150g cashew nuts (not salted or roasted)
12 dried apricots, roughly chopped
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the buckwheat:
350g buckwheat
50g harissa paste (look for a sugar-free one)
leaves from ½ bunch of fresh flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped (optional)
freshly ground black pepper

To serve:
leaves from ½ bunch of fresh mint or coriander (optional)

1 Heat a large pan over a medium heat and add the ras el hanout, turmeric and cumin and allow them to toast for a few minutes until they start to release their aromas. Then add the oil or butter and leek and cook for about 5 minutes, stirring regularly, until the leek softens. Add the garlic and ginger and cook for 1 minute more.

2 Stir in the aubergine, carrot, tomatoes, stock and salt and pepper and increase the heat to bring to the boil. Then, reduce to simmer away for 15 minutes, adding the chickpeas for the last 5 minutes.

3 As this cooks, put the buckwheat on to cook according to the packet instructions.

4 Heat a medium frying pan on a medium heat and toast the cashew nuts until golden, tossing regularly. Tip them on to a plate and set aside.

5 Once the buckwheat is cooked, remove from the heat, drain if necessary and return to the pan. Stir in the harissa and parsley, if using, along with a little pepper and then set aside with the lid on to keep warm.

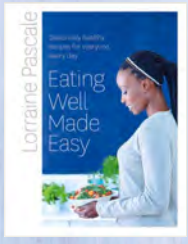
6 To check the tagine is ready, the carrot should be tender and the aubergine soft but with a little give in it. Add the apricots and cashew nuts and gently stir together. Season to taste.

7 Divide the buckwheat among the serving plates. Ladle the tagine on top, garnish with fresh mint or coriander leaves, if using, and serve.

■ PER SERVING 540 cals, fat 19g, sat fat 3g, carbs 72.5g, sugars 17.5g, protein 20.5g, salt 1.9g, fibre 12.5g

govegan

V To make this dish vegan, ensure you opt for the olive oil for frying.



Recipes adapted from *Eating Well Made Easy* by Lorraine Pascale (Harper Collins, £20). Photography by Myles New.



LEEK, AUBERGINE AND CHICKPEA TAGINE WITH CASHEW NUTS AND APRICOTS

Make and take

Get two for the price of one with easy recipes that are perfect for your evening meal, but make extra portions that will taste equally good when packed for a working lunch the next day.

Mushroom and spinach frittata

Serves 6 | Prep 15 mins | Cook 35 mins

6 tbsp olive oil
650g cold cooked potatoes, peeled and cubed
500g mixed mushrooms, quartered
2 cloves garlic, chopped
2 tbsp chopped fresh sage
2 red onions, sliced
125g spinach leaves
8 large free-range eggs, beaten
175g vegetarian Gorgonzola-style cheese, sliced (optional)
tenderstem broccoli, to serve

1 Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil and sauté the potatoes in batches for about 5 minutes, until golden. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to a plate.
2 Add 2 tablespoons of the oil to the pan and sauté the mushrooms in batches for about 5 minutes, until browned. Add the garlic and sage and cook for 1 minute. Transfer to a plate.
3 Add the remaining oil and sauté the onions for about 5 minutes, until softened. Add the spinach and sauté for 1 minute, until wilted. Stir in the potato and mushroom and mix together evenly.
4 Pour in the eggs, lightly shaking the pan until they are evenly distributed, and cook over a very low heat for about 5–7 minutes, until beginning to set around the edges.
5 Preheat the grill. Place the pan under the grill and cook for about 7 minutes, until golden and set. Remove from the heat and top with slices of cheese, if using, and cook for a further 2 minutes, until melted. Remove from the heat and allow to stand for 1 minute.
6 Cut the frittata into wedges. Serve with sautéed tenderstem broccoli, tossed in a pan with chopped chilli and garlic.

■ PER SERVING 451 cals, fat 29g, sat fat 9.5g, carbs 23.5g, sugars 4.5g, protein 22.5g, salt 1.3g, fibre 6g

TAKE FOR LUNCH Leftover frittata tastes delicious either hot or cold. If eaten cold, try serving with a mixed tomato salad.



MUSHROOM AND SPINACH FRITTATA

Roasted caponata

Serves 6 | Prep 15 mins | Cook 35 mins

2 aubergines, halved lengthways and cubed
8 tbsp olive oil
3 red onions, cut into small wedges
3 courgettes, halved lengthways and thickly sliced
8 medium tomatoes, halved
2 mixed coloured peppers, deseeded and sliced
4 cloves garlic, chopped
150g pitted black olives with herbs
3 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
3 tbsp chopped fresh basil
4 tbsp capers
orzo pasta, to serve
basil leaves and Parmesan shavings, for scattering

1 Preheat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Toss together the aubergine, half the olive oil, the red onion and courgette in a large roasting tin. Arrange the tomatoes in a separate roasting tin cut-side uppermost and add the peppers. Drizzle over the remaining olive oil. Roast the tomatoes for 35 minutes and the aubergine for 20 minutes.
2 Remove the aubergine from the oven and carefully stir in the garlic and olives. Bake for a further 15 minutes.
3 Remove both the tomatoes and aubergine mix from the oven. Gently stir the tomatoes and peppers into the aubergine mix, with the parsley, basil and capers.
4 Serve the caponata with orzo pasta, scattered with extra basil leaves and Parmesan-style shavings.

■ PER SERVING 530 cals, fat 23.5g, sat fat 5g, carbs 61g, sugars 15g, protein 16g, salt 2g, fibre 12.5g

govegan
V Scatter with shavings of vegan Parmesan-style cheese from VBites.

RECIPES AND STYLING: LIZ MARTIN
PHOTOGRAPHY: MICHAEL DANNENBERG



ROASTED CAPONATA

TAKE FOR LUNCH Serve reheated or cold as a pasta salad. Or for something different, blend the caponata with vegetable stock to make a lovely warming soup. Pack with fresh crusty bread.



STUFFED BAKED PEPPERS WITH SQUASH, QUINOA AND CAMEMBERT

Stuffed baked peppers with squash, quinoa and Camembert

Serves 6 | Prep 20 mins | Cook 1 hr

4 tbsp olive oil
700g squash, diced
2 tbsp thyme leaves
2 courgettes, cut into small cubes
6 small–medium mixed peppers, halved and deseeded
1 red onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, chopped
50g red and white quinoa
100g vegetarian Camembert, cubed

1 Preheat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Mix together the oil, squash, thyme and courgette in a roasting tin. In a separate roasting tin, arrange the peppers, cut-side uppermost. Roast the squash for 30 minutes and the peppers for 45 minutes.
2 Remove the squash from the heat and stir in the onion and garlic. Roast for 15 minutes, until softened. Remove both from the heat and allow to cool.
3 Meanwhile, cook the quinoa following packet instructions. Stir into the squash mix with the cheese.
4 Fill the pepper halves with the filling and bake for 10–15 minutes, until heated through. Remove from the oven and serve with a crunchy salad.

■ PER SERVING 228 cals, fat 13g, sat fat 4g, carbs 19g, sugars 12.5g, protein 7g, salt 0.3g, fibre 5g

TAKE FOR LUNCH Pack leftover peppers and eat cold or reheat. Drizzle with balsamic dressing.

Coconut, ginger and chickpea curry V

Serves 6 | Prep 20 mins
Cook 30 mins

2 tbsp olive oil
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 red or green chilli, chopped
1 tbsp chopped root ginger
1 bunch of spring onions, sliced diagonally
1 tbsp ground cumin
300g tenderstem broccoli, halved
275g French beans, trimmed
6 tomatoes, chopped
2 tbsp lemon juice
pinch of ground cinnamon
400ml can coconut milk
200ml hot vegetable stock



COCONUT, GINGER AND CHICKPEA CURRY

1 bunch of fresh coriander, broken into leaves
200g frozen soya beans
400g can chickpeas

1 Heat the oil in a pan and sauté the garlic, chilli, ginger and spring onion for 3 minutes. Add the cumin and cook for 1 minute.
2 Add the broccoli, beans, tomatoes, lemon juice, cinnamon, coconut milk, stock, half the coriander, the soya beans and chickpeas. Bring to the boil and simmer for 18–20 minutes, until the beans are tender
3 Serve the curry with rice and garnish with the remaining coriander.

■ PER SERVING 346 cals, fat 22.5g, sat fat 11g, carbs 20g, sugars 8g, protein 12g, salt 0.5g, fibre 10g

TAKE FOR LUNCH Reheat and serve the curry with pitta bread.



BAKED KALE AND
WALNUT RISOTTO

Baked kale and walnut risotto

Serves 6 | **Prep** 15 mins | **Cook** 45 mins

2 tbsp olive oil
150g walnuts
3 leeks, sliced
2 cloves garlic, chopped
350g Arborio rice
300ml white wine
2 tbsp chopped fresh sage
800ml vegetable stock
grated zest and juice 2 lemons
175g kale, roughly chopped
100g freshly grated vegetarian Parmesan-style cheese, plus extra to serve

1 Preheat the oven to 140C/fan 120C/gas 1. Heat the oil in an ovenproof dish and sauté the walnuts, until golden. Using a slotted spoon, transfer to a plate and allow to cool. Roughly chop half the walnuts.
2 Add the leek and garlic to the pan and sauté for 5 minutes. Add the rice and sauté for 2 minutes. Stir in the chopped walnuts, wine, sage, stock, lemon zest and juice. Bring to the boil, cover and bake in the oven for 20 minutes.
3 Remove the risotto from the oven, stir in the kale and Parmesan-style cheese and bake for a further 15 minutes.
4 Serve the risotto, scattered with the remaining whole walnuts and topped with grated Parmesan-style cheese.

■ PER SERVING 615 cals, fat 32g, sat fat 8g, carbs 55g, sugars 4g, protein 20.5g, salt 1.3g, fibre 4.5g

govegan

V Sprinkle gratings of vegan Parmesan-style cheese into your risotto. Nutritional yeast flakes also give a great 'Parmesan' flavour.

TAKE FOR LUNCH Simply pack the remaining risotto and reheat.

Sweet potato and pepper chilli with guacamole

Serves 6 | **Prep** 20 mins | **Cook** 1½ hrs

2 tbsp olive oil
750g sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
1 onion, chopped
1 red pepper, deseeded and chopped
1 yellow pepper, deseeded and chopped
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 red chilli, chopped
1 tbsp smoked paprika
1 tbsp ground cumin



SWEET POTATO AND PEPPER CHILLI WITH GUACAMOLE

1 tsp ground cinnamon
1 tbsp chipotle paste
2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes
2 tbsp sundried tomato paste
1 tsp mixed dried herbs
2 x 400g can red kidney beans, drained
juice of 1 lime
25g piece of dark chocolate or chilli chocolate
Greek yogurt, lime wedges, fresh coriander and shredded chilli, to serve

For the guacamole:
2 ripe avocados, halved and stoned
1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
juice of 1 lime

1 Preheat the oven to 140C/fan 120C/gas 1. Heat the oil in an ovenproof pan and sauté the sweet potatoes for 6–7 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the onion and peppers and sauté for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2 Stir in the garlic and chilli and sauté for 1 minute. Add the paprika, cumin and cinnamon, and cook for 1 minute. Stir in the chipotle paste, tomatoes, tomato paste, herbs, kidney beans, lime juice, chocolate and 100ml water. Bring to the boil, cover and cook in the oven for 1¼ hours.
3 To make the guacamole, mash the avocado and stir in the chilli and lime juice.
4 Garnish the chilli with fresh coriander and shredded chilli. Serve with rice, Greek yogurt, lime wedges and the guacamole.

■ PER SERVING 388 cals, fat 15.5g, sat fat 4g, carbs 51g, sugars 21g, protein 9.5g, salt 0.8g, fibre 11g

govegan

V Check your chocolate packaging to make sure that it is vegan. Use plain soya yogurt in place of Greek yogurt.

TAKE FOR LUNCH Reheat the chilli and serve with tortilla chips or use as a topping for a jacket potato.

At my table

Kaushy Patel runs the award-winning vegetarian restaurant Prashad in Bradford. In her second collection of recipes, she returns to her roots as a home cook, remembering her early days learning cooking skills at her grandmother's kitchen table in Northern India and sharing the colourful variety of dishes she makes for her own family today.

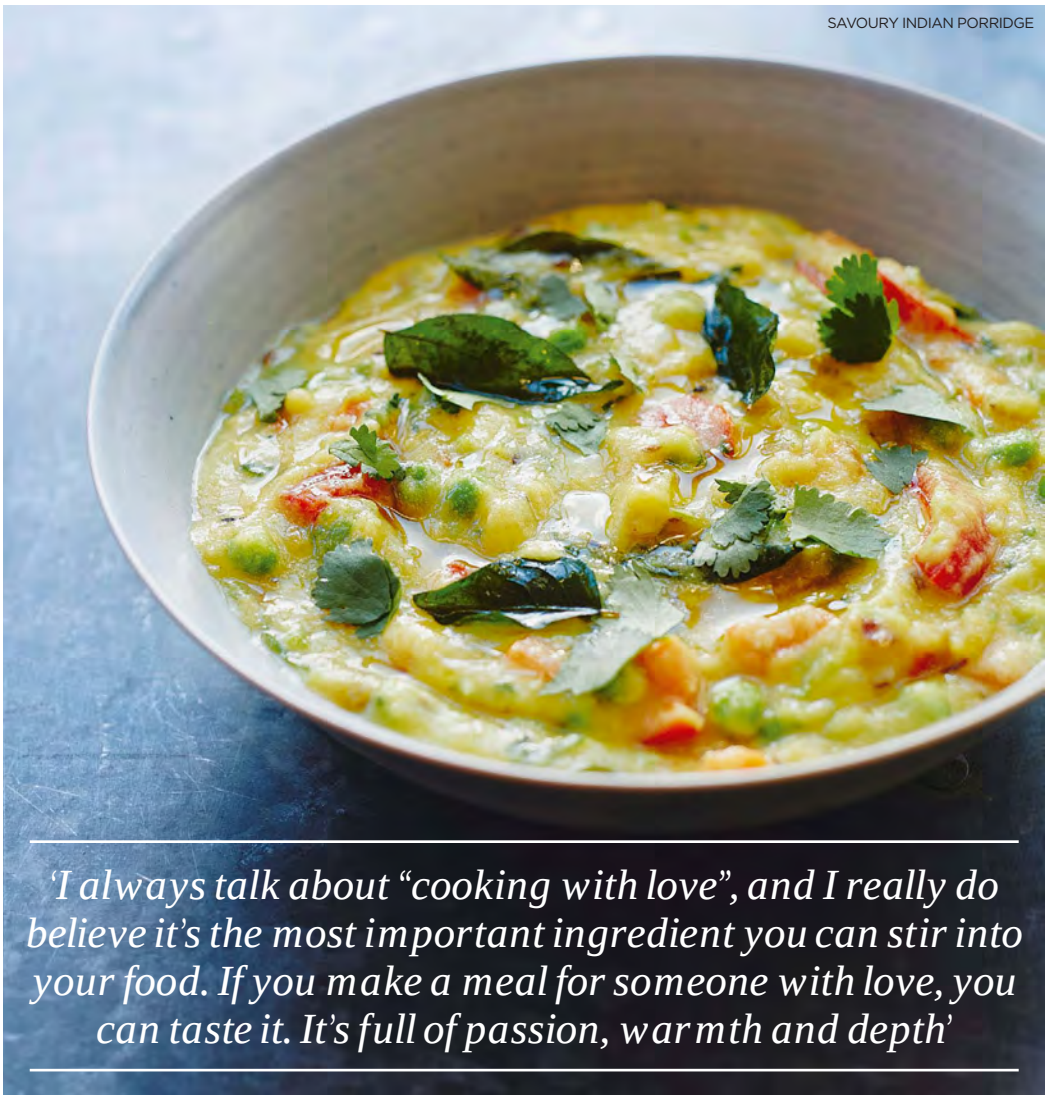


Savoury Indian porridge V

This porridge would traditionally be served for breakfast in India, but I think it works much better as a warming supper on a cold wintery British evening. It is actually a South Indian dish, but I've given it a few telltale Gujarati twists with some extra veggies, spices and fresh herbs. Single-bowl meals like this are perfect for speedy suppers – and there's less washing up too.

Serves 4 | Prep 20 mins | Cook 15 mins

50ml sunflower oil
2 tsp cumin seeds
½ tsp asafetida
10–12 fresh curry leaves, washed
½ medium onion, peeled and cut in 0.5cm dice
1 medium carrot, peeled and cut in 1cm dice
1 medium red pepper, cut in 1cm dice
100g frozen petits pois peas, thawed
5cm root ginger, peeled and blended to a pulp
4–6 fresh green chillies (ideally Kenyan), finely chopped (not blended)
½ tsp turmeric
2 tsp salt
2 handfuls of fresh coriander, washed and finely chopped, plus extra to garnish
215g fine semolina
800ml boiling water
olive oil, to serve



SAVOURY INDIAN PORRIDGE

'I always talk about "cooking with love", and I really do believe it's the most important ingredient you can stir into your food. If you make a meal for someone with love, you can taste it. It's full of passion, warmth and depth'

PHOTOGRAPHY: MATT RUSSELL

1 Heat the oil in a large, deep, thick-based frying pan for 2 minutes on a medium heat. Add the cumin seeds and swirl in the oil. Once they start to gently froth, stir in the asafetida.
2 Now add the curry leaves at arm's length and enjoy the lovely lemony sizzle for a moment before stirring in the onion and cooking uncovered for 1 minute. Stir in the carrot and cook for a further 2 minutes, then finally stir in the pepper and cook for 2 minutes more.
3 Once all the hard vegetables have started to soften, add the peas, ginger, green chillies, turmeric, salt and 1 handful of fresh coriander. Gently mix all the spices through and cook uncovered for 1½ minutes, helping all the flavours to develop.
4 Now add the semolina and 600ml of boiling water. Carefully stir everything together, folding the semolina and water through the vegetables, and cook for 1 minute. Turn the heat to low and cook for a further minute, then add the remaining 200ml of boiling water. Stir and cook covered for 30 seconds.
5 Serve straight away in large bowls with a drizzle of olive oil and a sprinkle of fresh coriander.

■ PER SERVING 420 cals, fat 20g, sat fat 2.5g, carbs 50g, sugars 7g, protein 10g, salt 2.9g, fibre 5.5g


VINE TOMATO SATAY

Vine tomato satay V

This sweet and spicy satay is one of my own creations and it has made many regular appearances on the Patel dining table over the years. It demonstrates how easy it is to elevate everyday ingredients into something to celebrate with just a few carefully balanced spices, which lies at the heart of all Gujarati cooking. For a more substantial dinner, I often serve these as a topping for a good old baked potato.

Serves 4 | Prep 35 mins + resting Cook 16 mins

For the masala:
1–3 fresh green chillies (ideally Kenyan), trimmed but not deseeded
2–4 cloves garlic, soaked and peeled
4cm root ginger, peeled and roughly chopped
pinch of salt

150g red-skinned (unroasted, unsalted) peanuts, finely chopped or blended
25g jaggery, cut in thin flakes (or demerara/soft brown sugar)
3½ tsp ground coriander
½ tsp ground cumin
2 tsp turmeric
1½ tsp salt
1 tsp cumin seeds
½ tsp asafetida
1 tsp medium red chilli powder
2 handfuls of fresh coriander, washed and finely chopped
100ml sunflower oil
9 medium vine tomatoes, washed
350ml boiling water

1 Crush the chillies, garlic and ginger together with a pinch of salt using a pestle and mortar (or a blender), to make a fine masala paste.
2 Put the peanuts, jaggery, ground coriander, ground cumin, turmeric, salt, cumin seeds, asafetida, chilli powder, masala paste and 1 handful of fresh coriander into a large mixing bowl. Pour the sunflower oil over the top. Using your hands, mix everything through, working the spices in. While you are rubbing the marinade between your fingers and thumbs, the jaggery will start to melt and create small spice-infused pockets. Leave to rest for 5 minutes.
3 While the marinade is resting, partially cut the tomatoes into quarters from the base, leaving the last couple of centimetres at the stem-end intact so that the tomatoes hold together. Gently prise them open and spread a generous quantity of marinade on to the cut surfaces. Be sure to spread it right to the end of the incisions but take care not to overfill them, as the tomatoes may split apart completely. This process ensures that the marinade fully infuses the tomatoes during cooking. If some of your tomatoes split, spread the marinade on the cut side before adding to the pan.
4 Arrange the filled tomatoes in a large pan facing up and drop any remaining marinade evenly between them. Place on a medium heat. Wash the marinade off your hands and into the marinade bowl using the hot water. Scrape all the marinade from the sides of the bowl, then stir into the warm water, making sure you don't waste any of the flavour. Once the tomatoes start to sizzle, gently pour this diluted marinade goodness into the gaps between them. Cover and cook for 6 minutes.
5 Very gently turn the tomatoes, then cover again and cook for a further 10 minutes. Take off the heat and leave to rest for 10 minutes to allow the flavours to develop. You may wonder why we have been so careful with the tomatoes throughout the process, since they will now have fallen apart, but I find that this slow breakdown allows the marinade to work its magic, adding a wonderful, rich taste.
6 Reheat over a medium heat, garnish with the remaining coriander and serve.
■ PER SERVING 538 cals, fat 44g, sat fat 6.5g, carbs 21g, sugars 15.5g, protein 13g, salt 2.7g, fibre 6g

Hyderabadi biryani

Ghee isn't an ingredient that we use often, as it is rather rich for everyday meals, but this particular biryani is known throughout the whole of India. It is special because of the unique flavours that come from the famous Hyderabadi masala, which combines fresh mint with dried red chillies, poppy seeds and coconut. It's a dish you won't forget.

Serves 4 | Prep 20 mins + resting Cook 30 mins

250g rice (ideally Tilda basmati), soaked in cold water for 30 minutes

For the Hyderabadi masala:
20g butter
2 dried red chillies, split in half
3 tsp white poppy seeds
½ tsp turmeric
30g desiccated coconut
8 fresh mint leaves, washed and finely chopped

2 carrots, peeled
85g broccoli
55g French beans
6 asparagus spears, trimmed
½ red pepper
½ aubergine (approx. 60g)
½ courgette
30g ghee (or clarified butter)
4cm cinnamon stick
2 Indian bay leaves, washed
5 black peppercorns
seeds from 2 cardamom pods
2 tsp garam masala
2 tsp salt



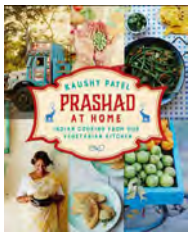


HYDERABADI BIRYANI

1 tsp medium red chilli powder
½ tsp dried fenugreek leaves
½ tsp turmeric
1 handful of fresh coriander, washed and finely chopped

1 Drain the rice and put in a large thick-based pan with 460ml of boiling water. Cover and cook on a high heat for 15 minutes. Take off the heat and leave to cool.
2 Melt the butter for the Hyderabadi masala in a thick-based frying pan on a low heat for 40 seconds. Swirl the dried red chillies through the melted butter, then add the poppy seeds. Add the turmeric, coconut, mint and ½ teaspoon of salt and stir for 1½ minutes. Take off the heat and leave to cool.
3 Cut all the vegetables into 1cm dice.
4 Melt the ghee in a thick-based frying pan on a medium heat for 1 minute and swirl it around the base of the pan. Stir the cinnamon into the ghee. Turn the heat up to high, then mix in the bay leaves, peppercorns and cardamom seeds and fry for 30 seconds.
5 Stir in the carrots and fry for 30 seconds, then the broccoli (45 seconds), French beans (30 seconds), asparagus (30 seconds) and pepper (30 seconds). Add the aubergine and courgette, reduce the heat to medium, stir and fry for 3½ minutes, before covering and leaving to cook for 1 minute.
6 Give the vegetables a good stir, add the garam masala, salt, chilli powder, fenugreek leaves and turmeric, then stir again. Sprinkle the fresh coriander on top and remove the pan from the heat.
7 Empty the rice into the vegetable pan and gently stir through. Finally stir in the Hyderabadi masala, then cover and leave to rest for 10 minutes before serving.

■ PER SERVING 474 cals, fat 21g, sat fat 12g, carbs 62.5g, sugars 6.5g, protein 10g, salt 3.2g, fibre 6g



Recipes adapted from *Prashad at Home* by Kaushy Patel (Saltyard Books, £25). Photography by Matt Russell.

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PHOTOGRAPH: KRIS KIRKHAM

COOKING FOR A CROWD

From a Middle Eastern mezze menu to a vibrant Ukrainian feast, serve up a taste of the exotic this month.

Ghillie Basan suggests taking inspiration from the Arabic tradition of mezze, a fun and fashionable way to share food with friends.

Share the love

BREAKING BREAD

'Throughout the Middle Eastern region, bread is regarded as the food of friendship, a gift from God', says Ghillie. 'Bought daily straight from the baker's oven and torn apart with fingers, it is shared and eaten with practically every meal. Mezze without bread is almost unthinkable; it is indispensable as a scoop or a mop for all the tasty flavours and juices, enhancing the pleasure of each mouthful.' To make your mezze go further, serve a plate of traditional pide, flatbread or pitta with your dishes.

Smoked aubergine salad with grilled peppers, spring onions and parsley V

Aubergines play a huge role on the mezze table – there are reputed to be around 200 dishes made with them – and smoking them over a gas flame, or on a charcoal grill, is one of the most enjoyable ways of cooking and eating them. The soft, smoky-flavoured flesh is combined with other ingredients for a variety of mezze dishes, such as the well-known Lebanese and Syrian speciality, baba ghanoush. This recipe is a popular salad all over the Mediterranean region and is one of my favourite aubergine mezze dishes.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAN BALDWIN



SMOKED AUBERGINE SALAD WITH GRILLED PEPPERS, SPRING ONIONS AND PARSLEY

Serves 6 | **Prep** 15 mins | **Cook** 25 mins

2–3 large aubergines
2 red peppers
2–3 cloves garlic, crushed
3–4 spring onions, trimmed and finely sliced
bunch of fresh flat-leaf parsley, coarsely chopped
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
2–3 tbsp olive oil
2 tbsp pomegranate syrup, or the freshly squeezed juice of 1 lemon

1 Place the aubergines and peppers directly on the gas flame, or on the grid over a charcoal grill. Over the flame, the skins of the aubergines and peppers will buckle and flake a little and will make a bit of a mess of your gas cooker but, over the charcoal grill, the skins will toughen and brown, leaving no mess! It doesn't matter which method you choose, but you are looking for the flesh of both the aubergines and the peppers to soften, so you need to keep turning them to make sure they are evenly smoked.

2 Once soft, pop them both into a clean, resealable plastic bag to sweat for 5 minutes, then hold them by the stalks under cold running water and peel off the skins. Squeeze out the excess water and put them on a chopping board. Remove the stalks of the aubergines and chop the flesh to a coarse pulp. Remove the stalks and seeds of the peppers and chop the flesh to a coarse pulp as well.

3 Tip the pulped flesh into a bowl and add the garlic, spring onions and parsley. Season well with salt and pepper (the smoked aubergine flesh needs salt to bring out the flavour) and bind the salad with the olive oil and pomegranate syrup or lemon juice. Drizzle a little extra pomegranate syrup over the top before serving.

■ PER SERVING 113 cals, fat 6g, sat fat 1g, carbs 8.5g, sugars 8g, protein 3g, salt 1g, fibre 7g

Courgette, feta and herb patties

These fried patties should be packed with herbs – the more the merrier – especially the mint. The patties are versatile, so you can also use grated raw carrot or fried leeks if you choose. Once cooked, they keep well and can be enjoyed cold as well as hot, straight out of the pan.

Serves 6 | Prep 20 mins | Cook 12 mins

3 free-range eggs
3 tbsp plain flour
2 firm courgettes
1 red or gold onion, cut in half lengthways, in half again crossways, and sliced with the grain
200g feta, crumbled
1–2 fresh red or green chillies, deseeded and finely chopped
2 tsp dried mint
bunch of fresh flat-leaf parsley, coarsely chopped
bunch of dill fronds, coarsely chopped
big bunch of fresh mint leaves, coarsely chopped (reserve a little finely chopped mint for garnishing)
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
sunflower oil, for frying
1–2 lemons, cut into wedges

1 In a big bowl, beat the eggs with the flour until smooth.
2 Trim off the ends of the courgettes, but don't peel them. Grate the courgette on the widest teeth of the grater, then squeeze out all of the water with your hands. Pile the courgette all on top of the flour and egg mixture.
3 Add the onion, feta, chillies, dried mint and fresh herbs and mix well with a large spoon or your hand. Season the mixture well with salt and pepper.
4 Heat a little sunflower oil in a heavy-based frying pan – don't put in too much oil; you can always add more as you fry the patties. Place 2–3 spoonfuls of the courgette mixture into the pan and fry over a medium heat for about 2 minutes each side, pressing the patties down a little with the spatula, so that they are flat but quite thick, lightly browned and firm. Cook the patties in batches, adding more oil to the pan when necessary, drain on paper towels, and keep the cooked ones warm under aluminium foil, or in a warm oven.
5 Arrange the patties on a serving dish, garnish with the reserved mint, and serve with wedges of lemon to squeeze over them.

■ PER SERVING 256 cals, fat 16g, sat fat 6g, carbs 16g, sugars 3.5g, protein 12g, salt 2.2g, fibre 3g



COURGETTE, FETA AND HERB PATTIES

'Aromatic, fragrant, spicy and moreish, mezze may be an ancient custom, but it has a modern twist. It is the epitome of modern eating – small portions, healthy ingredients, food to share'

Hot hummus with pine nuts and chilli butter

I first had this heavenly hummus some 30 years ago in a tiny village near Kars in eastern Anatolia. The hot, creamy dip, baked in a clay dish, was as welcome as it was soothing. It was such a memorable discovery that I have been writing about it, and enthusiastically devouring it, ever since. When most people think of the word 'hummus', they think of the ubiquitous thick, smooth, chickpea purée served at room temperature with pitta bread or crudités, not this delectable, hot version, called *sıcak humus* in Turkish. I add yogurt to the traditional recipe to make it more mousse-like and utterly moreish.

Serves 6 | Prep 15 mins | Cook 25 mins

2 x 400g cans chickpeas, drained and thoroughly rinsed
2 tsp cumin seeds
2–3 cloves garlic, crushed roughly
4 tbsp olive oil
freshly squeezed juice of 2 lemons
2 tbsp tahini
500ml thick, creamy yogurt
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 tbsp pine nuts
50g butter
1 tsp finely chopped dried red chilli
warm crusty bread, to serve

1 Preheat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6.
2 Instead of using a pestle and mortar to pound the chickpeas to a paste in the traditional manner, make life easy and tip the chickpeas into an electric blender. Add the cumin seeds, garlic, olive oil and lemon juice and whizz the mixture to a thick paste. Add the tahini and continue to blend until the mixture is really thick and smooth. Add the yogurt and whizz until the mixture has loosened a little and the texture is creamy. Season generously with salt and pepper and tip the mixture into an ovenproof dish.
3 Roast the pine nuts in a small frying pan until they begin to brown and emit a nutty aroma. Add the butter to the pine nuts and stir until it melts. Stir in the chopped chilli and pour the melted butter over the hummus, spooning the pine nuts all over the surface.
4 Pop the dish into the preheated oven for about 25 minutes, until the hummus has risen a little and most of the butter has been absorbed. Serve immediately with chunks of warm crusty bread.

■ PER SERVING 557 cals, fat 36g, sat fat 11.5g, carbs 41g, sugars 6g, protein 17g, salt 2.5g, fibre 7g



HOT HUMMUS WITH PINE NUTS AND CHILLI BUTTER

Date, pistachio and coconut truffles with honey

Throughout the Arab world, dates are offered as a mark of hospitality in the form of a sweetmeat, such as these delicious truffles, which keep well in the refrigerator. The best varieties of date for sweet and savoury mezze are the soft, ready-to-eat ones or the large, fleshy Medjool.

Serves 8 | Prep 25 mins

250g shelled, unsalted pistachios
250g stoned dates, roughly chopped
2 tsp ground cinnamon
2 tsp rosewater
1 tbsp runny honey
3 tbsp desiccated coconut

1 Dry-roast the pistachios in a small, heavy-based frying pan, until they emit a nutty aroma. Using a pestle and mortar, or an electric blender, coarsely grind the pistachios.
2 Add the dates with the cinnamon and pound, or blend, them with the ground pistachios to form a thick paste. Drizzle in the rosewater and honey while you are doing this to help loosen the mixture, although it will become stickier.
3 Once the paste is fairly smooth, dampen your fingers and take small portions into your hands and mould them into cherry-sized balls. Spread the desiccated coconut on a plate and roll the little truffles in it, making sure they are evenly coated.
4 Pop the truffles into a sealed container and keep in the refrigerator until you are ready to use them. They can be served chilled or at room temperature and go well with salty and spicy mezze dishes.

COOK'S TIP The truffles will keep for 2–3 weeks in the fridge.

■ PER SERVING 228 cals, fat 13.5g, sat fat 4.5g, carbs 21.5g, sugars 21g, protein 4.5g, salt 0.2g, fibre 4g



Recipes adapted from *Mezze* by Ghillie Basan (Ryland Peters & Small, £16.99). Photography by Jan Baldwin.



DATE, PISTACHIO AND COCONUT TRUFFLES WITH HONEY

TALES FROM A UKRAINIAN KITCHEN





Olia enjoys a picnic gathering with her family in Kakhovka

If you're entertaining foodie friends and looking for something a little different to serve, take inspiration from rising culinary star Olia Hercules. Her first cookbook is a very personal celebration of the food of her childhood in Ukraine and her combination of rich, vibrant ingredients and traditional recipes offer an exciting menu your guests will love.

INTERVIEW: LINDSEY HARRAD

Born in Kakhovka in Ukraine, two hours' drive from the Crimean border, food writer Olia Hercules is always surprised by the entrenched Western vision of her home country, which people typically associate with the vast, grey, bleak and of course, cold, image of Russia. But the traditional culture and way of life in Ukraine is very different.

'People expect Ukrainian food to be stark and stodgy,' she says. 'But the summer season is long – from April to October – and the soil in Ukraine is incredible, so we grow and cook with the most fantastic produce. We have the best tomatoes and watermelons in the world, amazing aubergines, courgettes, sour cherries, apricots and mulberries growing everywhere, with fruit falling before your feet. It's beautiful.'

Memories of home

Growing up, her family always ate with the seasons, and Olia says one of her first food memories is the glorious smell of the first cucumbers in spring. 'They were prickly and still warm from the sun, only just picked. I remember Mum chopping them over an enamel bowl. While I have lots of memories like these, I'll be honest and say that I didn't do much cooking myself when I was little, but I loved to watch my grandmother, mother and aunties do amazing things with dough.'

Olia started her career as a journalist but says it was the 2008 economic crisis that led her to take a different path. 'I had an inkling that I may lose my job at Screen International – a lot of people were being made redundant at the time. I was obsessed with food and took the chance to retrain and build my life anew.'

After training at Leith's School of Food and Wine, Olia honed her skills working in the kitchens of Ottolenghi, where she says she discovered a fresh appreciation for meat-free cooking. 'Working for Ottolenghi I learned so much, including how to season properly, how to make amazing dressings that take a salad from ordinary to amazing, plus it also changed my outlook on vegetarian cooking. You have to be so much more creative when cooking veggie. It can be so much fun – I love working with vegetables, they are all so beautiful.'

A family scrapbook

After having her son Sasha, Olia's career is now more focused on recipe writing and food styling. *Mamushka* is her first cookbook, which she describes as 'stories and histories communicated through recipes'. It's a wonderful, eclectic and vibrant collection of memories, food and family photos, reflecting on a happy childhood filled with a variety of cultural and culinary influences, from a Siberian grandmother, a father born in Uzbekistan and a mother with Jewish and Moldovan roots.

The title of the book is a made-up word, an affectionate nickname for their mother by Olia and her brother, inspired rather unexpectedly by a scene from *The Addams Family* – but Olia says the word is now associated with all the strong women in her family, even more so now she is a 'mamushka' herself. As she says in the introduction to the book: 'This book is an ode to all those

PHOTOGRAPHY: KRIS KIRKHAM





MUSHROOM BROTH WITH BUCKWHEAT

women (and men) that I was raised by and grew up with, and the food they lovingly prepared. It's food so familiar to me that I hadn't realised it was something special until I became a chef, and even more so when the conflict in Ukraine erupted, prompting me into frantically documenting the recipes that I was so scared I might suddenly lose.'

Now living in the UK, Olia says she misses some of the signature ingredients that are so popular in Ukraine and would love to see them becoming more widely used. 'Sorrel is such an underused leaf here – it should be everywhere! I also think ingredients like dill heads and blackcurrant leaves are under-rated too. They add the most amazing flavour to pickles and ferments.'

Although she's an eclectic cook at home, inspired by influences from all over the world, the popularity of *Mamushka* has sparked a keen interest in her native cuisine. 'I've really enjoyed doing my Ukrainian-inspired feasts recently. It was great to meet people who want to eat your food. Who knows, maybe I will open something permanent one day. Seeing people enjoy food gives me such a great feeling.'

OLIA'S RECIPES

Mushroom broth with buckwheat

One of my first food memories is of my mother cooking this broth. My dad brought some dried ceps from Belarus, and I remember the intoxicating smell and how dark the broth was – it was almost black. My mum made it with homemade noodles, but I like to mix it up a bit and buckwheat gives it a lovely texture.

Serves 4 | Prep 20 mins + soaking
Cook 50 mins

2 large potatoes, peeled and diced
100g buckwheat
1Ð tbsp sunflower oil
1 onion, chopped
1 carrot, peeled and grated
20g butter
50g wild mushrooms, trimmed and sliced
sea salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper

For the stock:
50g dried ceps
1 onion, peeled but kept whole
1 bay leaf
2.5 litres cold water

To serve:
2 tbsp chopped dill
50ml soured cream

1 To make the stock, soak the ceps in cold water to cover for about 1 hour (this helps get rid of the grit), then strain through a fine sieve, reserving the liquid.
2 Place the ceps and their soaking liquid, whole onion and bay leaf in a saucepan and cover with the water. Bring to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes.
3 Season to taste with salt and pepper, add the potatoes and buckwheat, then cook for a further 15 minutes.
4 Meanwhile, put 1 tablespoon of the sunflower oil in a frying pan and sweat the chopped onion over a medium-low heat for 5 minutes. Add



UKRAINIAN GARLIC BREAD



the carrot and cook for another 5 minutes, stirring often.

5 Add the carrot and onion to the broth, but don't rinse out the frying pan. Melt the butter in the pan over a medium-high heat and add the remaining sunflower oil. Fry the wild mushrooms for about 5–7 minutes until golden, then add them to the broth.

6 Serve the soup with the dill, soured cream and the garlic bread, below.

■ PER SERVING 315 cals, fat 12g, sat fat 5g, carbs 44.5g, sugars 7.5g, protein 7.5g, salt 1.1g, fibre 5.5g

Ukrainian garlic bread

These rolls are known as pampushky. The word *pampushka* can be used to describe a gorgeous plump woman and is one of my favourite words. Pam-poo-shka! In Ukraine, we would use regular garlic, so if you can't find wet (new) garlic don't worry – it will still be delicious.

Makes 8 breads
Prep 30 mins + proving overnight
Cook 25 mins

15g fresh yeast or 7g dried active yeast
1 tsp caster sugar
225ml warm water
400g strong white flour, plus extra for dusting
8g fine sea salt
3 tbsp sunflower oil, plus extra for oiling
20g wet (new) or regular garlic, crushed
½ bunch of parsley, finely chopped

'I was born in Kakhovka, Ukraine, only two hours' drive from the Crimean border. Our winters are mild, our summers long and hot and our food a cornucopia of colour and flavour'

1 free-range duck (or chicken) egg, beaten, to glaze

1 First make a 'sponge', which is a type of yeasty starter. Dissolve the yeast and sugar in the measurement water (make sure it's blood temperature – hot water would kill the yeast!). Add 200g of the flour and mix roughly. Cover with cling film and leave to prove in the refrigerator overnight.

2 The next morning, add the rest of the flour and fine sea salt to the starter and knead on a well-floured work surface until the dough is smooth and comes away from your hands easily.

3 Divide the dough into 8 pieces and shape into round buns. Put them side by side in an oiled round ovenproof dish or a 24cm round cake tin, cover and let them prove again, this time in a warm place, until doubled in size. They will join together just like hot cross buns do.

4 Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 220C/fan 200C/gas 7. To make the basting oil, simply stir the crushed garlic through the oil with a small pinch of sea salt and the chopped parsley, then let it infuse.

5 When the pampushky look plump and ready, brush them generously with some beaten egg to glaze and bake for 20–25 minutes or until they form a glistening golden crust. Take them out and baste them with the garlic oil. Serve immediately.

■ PER BREAD 247 cals, fat 7g, sat fat 1g, carbs 41g, sugars 1.5g, protein 6.5g, salt 1g, fibre 2.5g

Beetroot and prune salad

This is my version of a salad that my cousin Ira used to bring to our huge family gatherings. The original had a mayo dressing as far as I remember, and the beetroot was boiled. The dressing should be really garlicky; the edges of the beetroot crispy and intense. Spring onion would make a great substitute or an addition to fresh coriander.

Serves 6 as a side | **Prep** 10 mins
Cook 40 mins

1kg beetroot, peeled and each sliced into 8 wedges
2 tbsp sunflower oil

Potato cakes with goat's cheese

Goats are huge where I come from. They are superstars. They are everywhere. Raw goat's milk was my biggest nightmare, but here I am bringing the more palatable side of goatiness to Ukraine's favourite potato cakes. They are amazing served with my blackberry sauce.

Serves 2 as a side | **Prep** 15 mins
Cook 15 mins

500g floury potatoes, peeled and roughly grated
1 small onion, roughly grated
1 small carrot, peeled and roughly grated
1 free-range egg, lightly beaten
3 tbsp plain flour
30g vegetarian goat's cheese, mashed with a fork
2 tbsp sunflower oil
fine sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4 and line a baking sheet with some baking parchment.
2 Mix everything except the oil together in a bowl and season really well with salt and pepper.
3 Heat the oil in a large frying pan, drop separate dessertspoonfuls of the mixture into the pan and fry them for 2 minutes. Carefully flip them over and fry on the other side until golden.
4 Pop the potato cakes on the prepared baking sheet and finish cooking them through in the oven – they should take 5–10 minutes.

■ PER SERVING (WITH SAUCE) 753 cals, fat 31.5g, sat fat 11.5g, carbs 95g, sugars 17g, protein 17g, salt 2.9g, fibre 10g

Blackberry sauce

Serves 2 | **Prep** 5 mins | **Cook** 15 mins

25g butter
½ tbsp olive oil
60g shallots, very finely diced
2 tsp sherry vinegar
40ml port
100g blackberries
4 sprigs of lemon thyme, leaves picked and chopped
1 tsp caster sugar
sea salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper

1 Heat the butter and olive oil in a frying pan, add the shallots and sherry vinegar and sweat over a low heat for 10 minutes until the shallots have softened.
2 Raise the heat to medium. Now watch your eyebrows and shout 'flambé!' as you add the port, tilt the pan away from you to catch the flames and flambé until the flame dies down. It may not do much in terms of flavour (it just burns the alcohol off more quickly), but it may impress your date!
3 Add the blackberries, crush them slightly with a fork and cook over a medium–low heat for about 5 minutes. Add the lemon thyme and sugar, season well with salt and pepper and cook for another minute or so.


BLACKBERRY SAUCE

100ml soured cream
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
2 cloves garlic, crushed
25g good quality pitted prunes, roughly chopped
25g walnut halves, toasted and halved lengthways
2 tbsp fresh coriander leaves
sea salt flakes and freshly ground black pepper

1 Preheat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Toss the beetroot in the oil and season generously with salt and pepper. Place in a roasting tin and bake for 40 minutes or until the beetroot is tender and starts caramelising at the edges.
2 Mix the soured cream, balsamic vinegar and garlic together, season well with salt and pepper and stir. Add a little bit of water if the dressing is too thick.
3 Serve the beetroot on a platter, drizzled with the dressing and topped with the prunes, walnuts and coriander.

■ PER SERVING 191 cals, fat 10g, sat fat 3g, carbs 18.5g, sugars 17g, protein 5g, salt 1.5g, fibre 5g


BEETROOT AND PRUNE SALAD


APPLE SPONGE

Apple sponge

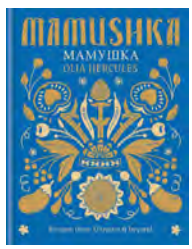
This is one of the easiest cakes to whip up in seconds. Whenever we had a craving for something sweet, my mum would make this, which she simply called *biskvit* ('a sponge'). It is mostly apples, combined with some fluffy eggy batter spiced with cinnamon and sprinkled with icing sugar.

Serves 6 | Prep 15 mins | Cook 35 mins

butter, for greasing
5 free-range eggs
200g caster sugar
200g plain flour, sifted
1 tsp ground cinnamon
4 green apples, cored and thinly sliced
icing sugar, for dusting

1 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4, and butter a 20 x 30cm cake tin with a removable base.
2 Beat the eggs and caster sugar together in a bowl with an electric whisk for at least 5 minutes, until very thick, pale and foamy. There is no raising agent in this cake, so the amount of air you beat into it is essential. Gently fold the flour into the egg mixture.
3 Mix the cinnamon with the apples, then tip the apples into the prepared cake tin and pour the cake batter evenly over the apples. Bake for 35 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the cake comes out clean.
4 Let it cool in the tin. Dust with some icing sugar, cut into squares and serve.

■ PER SERVING 372 cals, fat 6g, sat fat 2g, carbs 73g, sugars 47.5g, protein 9g, salt 0.2g, fibre 3g



Recipes adapted from *Mamushka: Recipes from Ukraine and Beyond* by Olia Hercules (Mitchell Beazley, £25). Photography by Kris Kirkham.

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The pumpkin is a vegetable that just keeps on giving. From soup, to puddings, to pizza, Sarah Beattie discovers you can easily feed a crowd if you keep this super-sized squash in your pantry.

Pumpkin: The party pleaser

Pumpkin: you can't even say the word without smiling. We might think the French a little odd for calling their dear ones a cabbage (*mon petit chou*), but on the other hand consider it completely fine for 'pumpkin' to be a term of endearment that's come across the Atlantic. Pumpkins are a symbol of plenty, of thanksgiving and harvest home. Their size and colour speak of richness, warmth and generosity. Unlike the summer squashes, pumpkins last into the grey days of late autumn and beyond. Some store better than others, but often you can keep pumpkins right through until spring.

Pumpkin, with its sweetish flesh, lends itself to hot and spicy curries and tagines, to roasting with cumin and coriander, or to baking and glazing with citrus or balsamic vinegar. It purées into mash and soups, can be whipped into soufflés and quiches, or added to risotto. In all of these cases, a fiery peppery or gingery note will ensure it's never cloying or bland. And, of course, pumpkin can be pie, as in the American dessert, when cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice or cloves are used in combination – often with the addition of far too much sugar, in my opinion. A great addition to breads, cakes and muffins too, pumpkin adds sweetness and gives a moist crumb when grated into the batter or mixed in as a purée.

Cutting up a pumpkin is probably the closest a vegetarian comes to butchery: slice the top off, pull out the entrails, remove the skin and cut up the flesh. It sounds a bit Halloween-gory. If your pumpkin has decent-sized seeds, rinse them off, spread on a baking tray, then sprinkle with salt and roast in the oven. Crack the skins off and eat the kernels instead of nuts. When we were kids we used to thread them to make necklaces or bracelets. Now I wash and dry some of the seeds for planting next year.

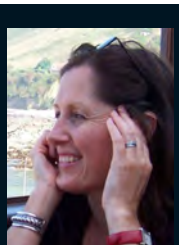
Planting a pumpkin is a good way for children to start gardening: the seeds are large, they germinate quickly and the plants are impressive, scrambling their way across your veg patch and trying to cross the lawn. Watching the flower buds swell, open, attract bees, fade and set fruit is a clear, vivid explanation to children of how our food grows.

Pumpkins came to the UK from the Americas, but not as recently as you might think: they were known in Britain from the 16th century. Since the 1980s, with the arrival of other squashes, such as butternut, they have been better appreciated. Certainly the adoption of the pumpkin instead of a turnip for a jack-o'-lantern has meant they are plentiful in all supermarkets in October. After Halloween, pumpkins are the year's best bargain when shops discount them heavily. Their size means you can feed a lot of people very cheaply, so make the most of the bounty and throw a party.

This pumpkin pizza might not please the purists, but it's tasty and filling. It will serve eight, making two large pizzas. You can also use the topping to spread on baked polenta (that would give you a gluten-free option) or you could use a non-dairy blue cheese for vegans. Sage and pumpkin is a classic Italian combination used in ravioli stuffings, but if you don't care for it, rosemary or thyme work well too.



SARAH BEATTIE



is the author of seven cookbooks and a *Vegetarian Living* regular. She has been vegetarian since she was 17 and revels in the pleasure of good food through the alchemy of cooking. She has appeared on *BBC Food & Drink, This Morning* and *Woman's Hour* and has been shortlisted for the prestigious Guild of Food Writers Cookery Journalist of the Year award in 2013 and 2015.

FOLLOW ON TWITTER @sarahbeattiegra

PHOTOGRAPHY © SARAH BEATTIE 2015

Pumpkin, sage and blue cheese pizza

Serves 8 | **Prep** 20 mins + proving
Cook 20 mins

600g strong white flour
1 tsp salt
2 tsp dried instant yeast
scant 500ml warm water
3 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for greasing
250g onions, chopped
4 cloves garlic, chopped
2 tbsp chopped fresh sage
1kg roughly mashed pumpkin purée (see box, below)
salt and pepper
250g vegetarian blue cheese (I used Mrs Bell's Blue, made by Shepherd's Purse)
a few pecans (optional)
1 tbsp smoked ñora chilli flakes (optional)

1 Combine the flour, salt and yeast in a large bowl. Gradually add the water to make a soft dough and knead until smooth and elastic. Cover and leave to rise for 1 hour.
2 When the dough has doubled in size, punch it down and knead lightly again. Preheat the oven to its highest temperature.
3 Heat the oil and fry the onion until softened and beginning to colour. Add the garlic and sage and fry for a couple of minutes. Add the pumpkin and cook until the mixture is hot and thick. Season well, but bear in mind you are adding blue cheese which is often salty.
4 Oil two large (35cm) baking trays. Divide the dough in half and flatten each to a large round on each tray.
5 Cover the dough with the pumpkin mixture. Dot the surface with crumbled chunks of the cheese. Scatter over the pecans and chilli flakes, if using. Bake for 20 minutes, until the bases are crisp and golden.

PER SERVING 485 cals, fat 19g, sat fat 7g, carbs 64.5g, sugars 5.5g, protein 15.5g, salt 2.5g, fibre 5.5g

govegan

V A vegan blue-style cheese can be used here, with options from Sheese, VBites and No-Moo.

'Pumpkins are a symbol of plenty, of thanksgiving and harvest home. Their size and colour speak of richness, warmth and generosity'



More ideas... with roasted pumpkin

PUMPKIN PURÉE Make a versatile purée that can be used for sweet and savoury dishes and may even be frozen for use later in the year. Simply place cubes of pumpkin in a greased covered dish and roast in a moderate oven for about 20–25 minutes, until soft, then mash or whizz in a food processor. (A purée can be made from boiled pumpkin, but the resulting mixture can easily be too sloppy.)

MAKE A MEAL When you roast cubes of pumpkin it gives a more intense flavour, and you can use different oils for subtly different tastes or add onions, garlic, herbs or spices. Turn a tray of roasted pumpkin and other vegetables into a meal by throwing in some cubes of feta-type cheese or tofu and black olives, dates or sundried tomatoes a few minutes before the end of cooking.



Buy Sarah Beattie's latest book

Vegetarian Living's popular food writer Sarah Beattie has created a mouth-watering collection of over 150 exciting recipes using seasonal ingredients, with inspiration for everything from easy midweek meals to lavish dishes for gatherings and special occasions, plus a range of tempting cakes and desserts.

For a taste of what's on offer in *Meat-free Any Day*, try this richly flavoured oven soup for a vibrant and satisfying lunch.

Follow Sarah on Twitter **@sarahbeattiegra**



Oven soup with chèvre crostini

This soup evolved from how I prepare the glut of garden tomatoes for the freezer. Roasting concentrates the flavours, caramelising the sugars in the vegetables, giving a richness to the soup that you can't get if you cook it on the top of the stove. Great, big, meaty tomatoes – the knobbly misshapen ones – are best for this soup.

Serves 4 | **Prep** 5 mins | **Cook** 25 mins

300g onions, peeled and cut into large chunks
4 cloves garlic, unpeeled
500g large ripe tomatoes, quartered
300g red peppers, deseeded and quartered
3 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
salt and pepper
a few sprigs of thyme and rosemary
about 1 litre boiling water or stock
6 slices of ciabatta or similar
about 150g goat's cheese (the soft, loose sort)

1 Preheat the oven to 220C/fan 200C/gas 7.
2 Put the onions, garlic, tomatoes and peppers into one large or two smaller roasting trays. Shake the oil and vinegar in a screw-top jar and drizzle over the tray(s). Mix well with your hands as if dressing a salad. Season liberally with salt and pepper and scatter over the herbs. Roast for 25 minutes, shaking the pan from time to time.
3 Prepare the crostini by toasting the bread briefly and covering with the goat's cheese.
4 When the tomato mixture is soft and nicely browned, spoon into a tureen. Put the crostini into the oven in the roasting tin, to brown the cheese and crisp the toast.
5 Pick out the garlic from the tomato mixture, slip off the skins and return the cloves to the tureen. Purée until smooth with a hand blender, adding as much boiling water as needed to give the consistency of cream. Taste and adjust the seasoning. Serve with a hot crostini in each soup plate.

Recipe taken from *Meat-free Any Day* by Sarah Beattie (Select Publisher Services, £14.99).



SPECIAL OFFER!

Vegetarian Living readers can buy *Meat-free Any Day* for the discount price of £9.99. To order your copy, call +44 (0)1202 586848 or order online at **www.selectps.com**.

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SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

Family fun with Halloween bakes, stress-free suppers, grow-your-own mushrooms and tastier toast toppers.



PHOTOGRAPH: KATE WHITAKER

SPICED PUMPKIN COOKIES
PAGE 75



Home cooking with Chava

When time is tight, your energy is waning and the kids are hungry but fussy, Chava suggests taming your inner 'witch' with these easy meal solutions.



Do you ever dream of relaxing with a nice glass of wine while a flutter of kitchen fairies lovingly prepare your evening meal? Imagine their delicious offerings – nutritionally balanced and beautifully presented. With Halloween ahead, maybe it's just a case of believing really, really hard... Or maybe it's time to put away that bottle and get those potatoes peeled!

Now, don't get me wrong. I obviously adore cooking and love the opportunity to get creative in the kitchen. Yet somehow family meals can be different. If you're dealing with fussy eaters, you have to work with a seemingly minute list of 'approved ingredients'. And, of course, there's rarely enough time to leisurely create the wonderful feast you had in mind.

My column this month is inspired by a blog post that really stopped me in my tracks. Vicki Davis (from CoolCatTeacher) wrote: 'Sometimes our biggest enemy is the perfect person we try to be. My kids will be happier eating a frozen lasagne from a happy mom, than a home-cooked meal served by a witch.' It made me smile – and recall some of my very own 'witchy moments'! I know I'm not the only parent who gets stressed about some great recipe idea, only to find that both kids want my undivided attention – and I'm missing an important ingredient.

Family meals can evoke strong feelings in us. There's something very primeval about feeding our tribe. Cooking a favourite meal or creating a special birthday cake shows care and affection. Whenever I used to visit my grandma in Germany she'd give me bags of cashew nuts, dried apricots and other goodies to take home. I used to tease her that England was civilised and did have food in the shops! Of course, it didn't take me long to realise that this was one of her ways to express her love.

This issue's recipes, as usual, won't require loads of preparation time. Most importantly, there are some entirely 'witch-free' shop-bought suggestions too, for cook's cheats. If it will allow you to spend more time dressing up with the kids and having fun, then you've got my official approval to use them – as long as you save my recipes for another, calmer day!



BEWITCHED FALAFEL

COOK'S CHEAT
Great Food falafel

Bewitched falafel V*

About 10 years ago, I stopped at a small kebab place right next to Salzburg main train station. Who would have thought I'd find, in Austria, the best falafel I had ever eaten?! I remember the chickpea mixture was bright green, brimming with fresh herbs, and the falafel were shaped and fried to order. The flavour was amazing... Sunflower seeds are not usually part of a traditional recipe, but I really like the extra bite they add.

Makes 20
Prep 15 mins + soaking overnight
Cook 20 mins

150g dried chickpeas
50g fresh parsley
50g fresh coriander
1 large onion, quartered
2 large cloves garlic
1 level tsp salt
½ tsp baking powder
1 rounded tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp ground coriander
1 tbsp sunflower seeds (optional)
vegetable oil, for frying

1 Soak the chickpeas overnight.
2 Drain and place in a food processor, together with the parsley and coriander leaves (I left the stalks on the herbs too). Add the onion, garlic, salt, baking powder, cumin seeds and ground coriander. Process until almost smooth. Stir in the sunflower seeds and set aside.
3 Heat the vegetable oil in a large saucepan (or use a deep-fat fryer). To check that the oil is hot enough, dip in the handle end of a wooden spoon. If the oil starts to bubble around it, you're ready to go.
4 Use two tablespoons to make round shapes from the falafel mixture. Gently slide a few falafels into the hot oil using a slotted spoon. Turn each one a couple of times so they brown all over. Remove with a slotted spoon and place on kitchen paper to drain. Continue to fry the remaining mixture in batches.
5 Serve with pitta bread, hummus and salads of your choice.

■ PER FALAFEL 66 cals, fat 4g, sat fat 0.5g, carbs 4.5g, sugars 1g, protein 2g, salt 0.3g, fibre 1.5g





Seasonal Sunday roast

Celeriac and parsnips give this autumn roast a wonderful, earthy sweetness. It's a great Sunday treat and leftovers freeze well. Alternatively, they can also be made into tasty filled rolls with a cold slice of roast, salad and some chutney. I would definitely recommend using a food processor unless you feel the need to do lots of therapeutic grating and chopping.

Serves 8 | **Prep** 30 mins | **Cook** 45 mins

2 onions, chopped
2 tbsp olive oil
200g parsnip, peeled and roughly chopped
150g celeriac, peeled and roughly chopped
100g carrot, peeled and roughly chopped
200g (½ can) chopped tomatoes
2 cloves garlic, crushed
100g walnuts
400g can brown lentils, drained
25g fresh parsley
2 tbsp ground flax seeds
25g rolled oats
salt and pepper

1 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/ gas 4. Sauté the onions slowly in the olive oil until they begin to soften.
2 Meanwhile, place the parsnip, celeriac and carrot in a food processor and pulse until you get coarse crumbs. Add to the saucepan along with the tomatoes and garlic, and continue to cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3 Blend the walnuts, lentils and parsley to a smooth purée. Combine with all other ingredients, including the flax seeds (for binding), oats and the vegetables in the saucepan. Season well with salt and freshly ground black pepper.
4 Press the mixture firmly into a large roasting tin or choose a lined round cake tin. Bake for 45 minutes. Leave the roast to stand for 10 minutes before you remove it from the tin and serve in slices, or wedges if using a round tin.

COOK'S TIP Replace the salt for seasoning with 2 teaspoons of vegetable stock powder or 1 teaspoon of Marmite for added flavour.

■ PER SERVING 246 cals, fat 14g, sat fat 1.5g, carbs 20.5g, sugars 7g, protein 8g, salt 1g, fibre 5.5g

Alex's amazing chocolate pudding

My six-year-old came up with the recipe for this dessert. He just can't believe that his idea will really and actually appear in the magazine! I've helped out with quantities and the photography, but it's quite clear... I owe him a *treat* for his wonderful contribution. Maybe some afternoon tea will do the *trick*...

Serves 4 | **Prep** 5 mins | **Cook** 10 mins

500ml dairy-free milk
3 tbsp cocoa powder
3 tbsp cornflour
1 tbsp custard powder
3–4 tbsp light brown sugar, to taste
pinch of cinnamon (optional)
banana slices or fresh berries, to serve

1 Mix 150ml of the milk with the cocoa powder, cornflour and custard powder until completely smooth.
2 Gently heat the sugar and remaining milk over a medium heat.
3 Take the pan off the heat and pour in the chocolate mixture, while stirring continuously. (If the bottom of your pan is too hot you'll end up with lumps, so it's worth heating the pudding slowly.) Place the saucepan back on the hob and keep stirring until the dessert thickens.
4 Pour into 4 ramekins or pretty bowls. Serve with a sprinkling of cinnamon and banana slices or fresh berries.

■ PER SERVING 283 cals, fat 5g, sat fat 2g, carbs 55g, sugars 25.5g, protein 6.5g, salt 0.4g, fibre 2g

CHAVA EICHNER is a freelance food writer and photographer who passionately creates for Viva!, Animal Aid and National Vegetarian Week, among many others. She lives in the Cotswolds with her partner David and two young boys, Sam (8) and Alex (6). Go to her website and blog where you'll find more mouth-watering food inspiration at **www.flavourphotos.com**.

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Sugar & spice

Perfect for Halloween tea parties or Thanksgiving gifts for American friends, these lovely cookies with a hint of spice are a fun rainy-day bake.

Spiced pumpkin cookies

Makes 20 | **Prep** 30 mins + resting
Cook 10 mins

100g butter, softened
60g thick honey
150g soft brown sugar
1 free-range egg
250g plain flour
1 tsp mixed spice
1 tsp ground ginger
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda

To decorate:
250g ready-to-roll fondant icing
orange food colouring gel
1 free-range egg white, beaten
orange and green writing gels

1 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Line 2 baking sheets with baking parchment.
2 Put the butter, honey, sugar and egg in a large mixing bowl and beat together until smooth. Add the flour, spices and bicarbonate of soda and mix until you have a smooth, stiff dough. Leave the dough to rest for 30 minutes.
3 On a clean, lightly floured work surface, roll the dough out into a large rectangle with a thickness of about 3mm. Cut out cookies using the cookie cutter. Bring the trimmed dough together and roll out again to cut as many cookies out of the dough as possible. Arrange the cookies on the prepared baking sheets, leaving a little space for spreading between each one.
4 Bake the cookies in the preheated oven for 8–10 minutes, until golden and firm. Leave to cool slightly before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.
5 In the meantime, work a little orange food colouring gel into the fondant icing until the colour resembles pumpkin orange. Cut the icing out using the cookie cutter to cover the cookies. Brush the cookies with the beaten egg white and stick an orange icing pumpkin on to each cookie pumpkin, then use the writing gels to add the detail. Leave to set.



PHOTOGRAPH BY KATE WHITAKER

COOK'S TIP Store between layers of baking parchment in an airtight container or cookie jar and eat within 3 days.

PER COOKIE 148 cals, fat 4.5g, sat fat 3g, carbs 26.5g, sugars 17g, protein 2g, salt 0.1g, fibre 0.5g

Recipe adapted from *The Cookie Jar* by Liz Franklin (Ryland Peters & Small, £16.99). Photography by Kate Whitaker.

For a pumpkin-shaped cutter, try **www.craftcompany.co.uk**.

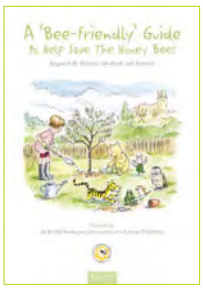
READER OFFER



GO COOKIE CRAZY!

Vegetarian Living readers can buy *The Cookie Jar* for the special price of £11.99, including p&p. Call 01256 302699 and quote reference GLR EB7.

Create a buzz



Bee aware

Did you know that in 2014/15 there was a population loss of honeybee colonies of 14.5 per cent? With these busy little pollinators playing such a vital role in our ecosystem, the British Beekeepers Association's Friends of the Honeybee campaign has joined forces with Winnie-the-Pooh, the UK's most famous fictional honey-loving bear, to inspire children and their families to do their bit to save our bees.

The Friends of the Honeybee campaign has joined forces with Egmont Publishing – the publisher of the classic Winnie-the-Pooh stories – to create a special 'bee-friendly' guide, which includes a brand-new short story and 10 simple activities to support British honey bees – all featuring Winnie-the-Pooh and friends in various parts of England, beautifully drawn by illustrator Mark Burgess, who coloured the original E.H. Shepard black-and-white art and the latest book, *Return to the Hundred Acre Wood*.

Full of activities from planting and baking to arts and crafts to educate children about the importance of bees, there is something for everyone to try!

Download this charming and practical guide at **www.friendsofthehoneybee.com**.



ILLUSTRATION BY MARK BURGESS AFTER E. H. SHEPARD © DISNEY 2015

YUM, YUM, HONEY!

As Winnie-the-Pooh once said: 'A day without a friend is like a pot without a single drop of honey left inside.' If you love honey as much as Pooh, support your local beekeepers and buy honey from farm shops and farmers' markets rather than mass-produced supermarket brands, and use it for everything from a toast topping to a baking ingredient to drizzling on blueberry pancakes!

Banana and honey oat cookies

Sweetened naturally with honey and banana, children will love making and eating these tasty cookies as an after-school snack.

Makes 18 | Prep 10 mins | Cook 20 mins

2 small ripe bananas (about 200g)
200g porridge/rolled oats
1 tsp baking powder
pinch of salt
75g (5 tbsp) butter, melted
2 tsp honey
1 free-range egg, beaten
handful of chocolate chips (optional)

1 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Line a baking sheet with baking paper.
2 In a bowl, using a blender, blitz the bananas, oats, baking powder and salt. Add the melted butter, honey and egg and stir. Once it's all mixed together, stir in the chocolate chips.
3 With a teaspoon, scoop out a blob of the mixture and place it on the baking sheet, with space between each one to allow them to spread.
4 Put the cookies in the middle of the oven, and bake for about 15–20 minutes, until golden brown.

■ PER COOKIE 112 cals, fat 5.5g, sat fat 3g, carbs 13.5g, sugars 6g, protein 2g, salt 0.2g, fibre 1.5g





Adapted from *The Crumbs Family Cookbook* by Claire & Lucy McDonald (CICO Books, £16.99). Photography by Stuart West.

Super scooper

Carving a traditional jack-o'-lantern from a pumpkin is a cheap and cheerful seasonal activity. We love this pumpkin scoop to help you hollow out your lanterns, £4 from Sainsbury's Home.

But it's even more thrifty if you save those seeds too. Simply deflesh and rinse the seeds, spread on a large baking sheet and toss with a drizzle of olive or rapeseed oil and some flavourings – sea salt and chilli flakes work well, but try other spices too – and roast at 180C/fan 160C/gas 4 for around 10 minutes. Leave to cool and store in an airtight container. Delicious!



RAINY-DAY INSPIRATION



Just because it's raining doesn't mean you can sit there gawping at a screen you know... And so begins this fantastic new follow-up to *101 Things for Kids to do Outside*, Dawn Isaac's first family activity book. In this new volume she turns her attention to the great British weather and those days when you suddenly realise that the trip to the farm or afternoon in the garden just isn't happening.

Packed full of games, projects, crafts and experiments, *101 Things for Kids to do on a Rainy Day* is must-have for any parent who worries about excessive screen time. The book has ideas for everything from setting up a living room obstacle course to getting crafty with decoupage and planting a terrarium. There are literally 101 ideas, all designed to be achievable with little or no parental help and only using easily available materials that you probably already have around the house.

● 101 Things for Kids to do on a Rainy Day *is published by Kyle Books on 15 October, £14.99.*

Hit list



If you haven't already signed up to the National Trust's 50 Things to Do Before You're 11¾, go to **www.50things.org.uk** and be inspired to try some new challenges. When you've completed all 50 adventures, you can claim a secret reward!

To help you tick some of the ideas on the list, why not go along to your local National Trust property this month and try something new? From building a secret hideaway using only what you find on the woodland floor, to making a home for a wild animal or plucking up the courage to befriend a spider, or even hunting for fossils and bones, there's something magical for everyone to experience.

Throughout half term, the National Trust is organising a range of activities and events, from bat detecting to wild crafts, Halloween trails and pumpkinfests. Find out what's on in your area at **www.nationaltrust.org.uk/events**.

MAKE

3 WAYS TO...
Help bees thrive

BUILD OR BUY A BEE HOUSE



1 Bee habitats can help to provide a safe home for solitary bees to rest in between their search for nectar and pollen from fresh flowers and vegetables. You can buy or put together your own bee house and hang it on a tree or an outside wall as a shelter for solitary bees, similar to a birdhouse.

We love this bee hotel, £19.95 from **www.dotcomgiftshop.com**, or for a guide to making your own download Friends of the Earth's handy instructions at **www.foe.co.uk/sites/default/files/downloads/bee_hotel.pdf.**

PLANT A FLOWERING TREE



2 Autumn is the perfect time to plant a flowering tree, as the soil is still warm from the summer and moist from autumn rain. From cherry trees to crab apples, choose a tree that produces fruit you and your family will like to eat or use, and it will be useful for you and the bees! Ensure you choose a tree that is right for the size and location you want to plant it – a dwarf variety may be a good idea for a small garden!

THROW A SEED 'BOMB'



3 Planting bee-friendly flowers, herbs and vegetables on your allotment, in your back garden or even a window box or patio pot is a great way to help bees thrive, but you can have fun growing wildflowers that bees will love on patches of wasteland by throwing a 'seed bomb'. Try your local garden centre or buy the Pollinator Beebom, £2.99 from **www.nigelsecostore.com**.

● *Find more bee-related craft ideas and recipes at* **www.bbka.org.uk/kids/more_childrens_corner.**



On the toadstool trail



Gardening editor Alice Whitehead uncovers the feast of fungi to be foraged in the UK's woodlands this month and gets expert advice on capturing, cultivating and cooking your own.

If you go down to the woods today, you're sure of a big surprise. No, not picnicking bears, but the awe-inspiring appearance of another fairytale phenomenon. From amethyst deceivers and chicken-of-the-woods to slippery jacks and scarlet elf cups, wild mushrooms can turn craggy tree stumps and humus-rich nooks and crannies into a Disney *Fantasia*. In fact, our woodlands and meadows are home to almost 15,000 marvellous mushrooms, with around 300 edible varieties – and, in October, they are ripe for the picking.

An enchanting world

For seasoned 'shroom' stalker Fred Gillam, aka 'Fred the Forager', who runs Wild Side of Life foraging courses in his home county of Wiltshire, mushroom foraging has become a way of life.

'There are very few days when I don't go out to provide mushrooms for the table – I eat at least 100 species,' says Fred. 'There are mushrooms that taste of marzipan; purple ones you can pickle in vodka; giant puffballs that weigh 8lb which can be stuffed with vegetables and slow-baked; little aquamarine-coloured funnels that impart a powerful aniseed flavour, and others that can be ground into a powder akin to chilli. The diversity of flavour, texture and gastronomic potential in wild mushrooms is unbelievable.'

Fred's passion for these noble roots stems from his rural upbringing in the Wiltshire countryside, on an estate where his father was head gardener. 'I developed an early fascination with all things "nature", and at 14 was out on an early morning autumn cycle ride with a friend when we spotted some truly enormous mushrooms towering above the dewy meadow grass,' he recalls. 'I felt as if I'd opened a door on to an enchanting world – and as it turned out that's exactly what I had done. On discovering my first parasol mushrooms, I'd started off on a very long and rewarding journey.'

Foraging secrets

While Fred doesn't have a favourite place to forage (the location of the best mushrooms can vary year to year), he does have favourite varieties and of the 300 edible species, he suggests only 100 are worth seeking out. 'There are plenty of mushrooms you can eat but many of them lack flavour, or simply don't taste like food at all!' he says.

On one of his immersive, four-day Secret Sunday Mushroom Clubs (the location of which is kept quiet until the last minute, so Fred can seek out the best blooms), pickings can include everything from umbrella-shaped bay boletes and meaty chanterelles to oysters, pungent porcinis (or ceps) – some weighing up to 3lb – and his granddad's favourite: the blue-lilac wood blewit. 'If you know what you're doing in October, your basket should never be empty!' he says.

But even experienced mushroom hunters like Fred remember the golden rule when seeking out these spore-bearing fruits. 'An old mushroom hunter once said to me: "There are old mushroom hunters, there are bold mushroom hunters, but there are no old, bold, mushroom hunters!" If you're serious about wanting to learn to hunt for and cook wild mushrooms, then don't try to do it from books alone. There are many poisonous species and a couple of dozen that can make you seriously ill. One tiny mistake could cost you your life, so it's essential to find a good tutor.'



Not just a tasty meal...

Earthy but almost unearthly, tasty but also toxic; these beguiling blooms might be a gourmet gem but they also have far-reaching potential beyond the harvesting basket.



Chlorophyllum rhacodes

© ANDY OVERALL





Armillaria mellea

© ANDY OVERALL



'I've been studying them for 32 years, but each year I continue to learn,' says Fred. 'We seldom see fungi unless we notice their fruit – the mushroom part – and yet 85 per cent of all land plants are dependent on fungi. Mushrooms are now being used in medicine to cure some of the world's toughest diseases, to clear up pollution spills, and even to grow new alternatives to plastics.

'They play an enormously important, yet unseen role in breaking down nature's big organic molecules and feeding the by-products to the plant kingdom. Without fungi, we would all starve.'

HOW TO EAT...

Our experts suggest the fungi to find and feast on at your local farmers' market this autumn.

Fred Gillam recommends...

The cultivated king oyster. Excellent sliced and gently sautéed with herbs and garlic. Add a splash of balsamic vinegar and stir for 3–4 minutes before serving.

Andy Overall recommends...

Chanterelles or ceps. Cook on a high heat to remove excess moisture and set aside. Add some white wine to the pan, reduce down and add a little butter, along with the mushrooms and a dash of crème fraîche. Or fry thin slithers of chicken-of-the-wood in butter until brown and serve as chips!





FORAGING TIPS

- Don't forage without the landowner's permission and check local conservation bylaws.
- Don't rely on books or the internet when foraging. 'If in doubt, leave it out,' says Andy Overall, who runs Fungi To be With courses and events in London. 'Don't eat anything unless you are 100 per cent sure of what you have: 99 per cent is not good enough. Always go out with an experienced expert.'
- Don't use plastic carrier bags to take your find home. 'It's a cardinal sin, as the mushrooms sweat and turn smelly and slimy,' says Fred.

BE SAFE, GO ON A COURSE

Fred the Forager: **www.thewildsideoflife.co.uk**
Andy Overall: **www.fungitobewith.org**

READER OFFERS

GET KITTED OUT!

- Fungi Futures are offering three GroCycle mushroom kits to readers. To enter, go to **www.vegetarianliving.co.uk/offers**. Competition closes midday 29 September 2015.



- The Espresso Mushroom Company is offering 15% off Kitchen Garden mushroom kits to *Vegetarian Living* readers. Simply enter discount code 'LIVING15' at the online checkout at **www.espressomushroom.co.uk**.



Fantasticfungi

PROJECT
HOW TO GROW...

Safer than foraging, it's easy to grow your own mushrooms. Here's how to get started.

Books and bog rolls

DIY The perfect use for your *Fifty Shades of Grey*: oyster or shiitake mushrooms will happily colonise a good paperback (and a bad one too), as well as unused toilet rolls. Dip the paper in hot water (to pasteurise) and, once cooled, 'inoculate' by crumbling the spawn (order from www.mushroombox.co.uk) over the top and inside. Pop in a specialist growbag (www.mushroomgrowingbags.co.uk) and mist and aerate each day. Ready in two weeks.
SHOP Buy ready-made kits from www.rusticmushrooms.co.uk or www.annforfungi.co.uk.

Coffee grounds

DIY Already pasteurised thanks to the brewing process, spent coffee offers a less fussy growing medium. With clean hands, mix 2.5kg coffee with 500g spawn and pour into a growbag. Once the contents go white, cut open and allow the mushrooms to form.
SHOP Get kits from Fungi Futures (www.grocycle.com) or the Espresso Mushroom Company (www.espressomushroom.co.uk), which both reuse coffee waste from local cafés.

Log and dowel

DIY Buy dowels impregnated with spawn (www.annforfungi.co.uk) and plant into hardwood logs (e.g. beech, oak or birch). Drill three rows of holes 15cm apart down the length and push the dowels in so they are flush with the surface. Seal with wax and keep somewhere shady. Look out for small white nodes over four or five weeks.
SHOP Source ready-to-fruit logs from www.organiccatalogue.com.



Something 'on toast' is a great speedy supper solution, but it doesn't have to be boring baked beans again. Try these inventive and healthy homemade ideas the whole family will love – for breakfast, lunch or tea!

Toast Toppers

Roasted seed butter V

Peanuts are not actually nuts but seeds and contain large reserves of protein. Roasting and grinding produces a spreadable butter. You can do this with many types of seed and in this case the sweetish flavour of the sunflower seeds is enhanced with healthy agave syrup. A hint of salt brings out the sweetness.

Makes 300g jar | **Prep/cook** 35 mins



ROASTED SEED BUTTER

280g sunflower seeds
2 tbsp olive oil
1 tbsp agave syrup
4 slices brown bloomer
flaky sea salt

1 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Tip the seeds on to a lipped baking tray and roast in the oven for 20–25 minutes or until a deep golden brown, shaking the tray every so often. Leave to cool a little, then tip into the bowl of a food processor.
2 Whizz until you have the consistency of butter – this may take up to 10 minutes – scraping the mixture down from the sides every so often. Add the oil and agave syrup, and a good few pinches of salt and blend. Check the level of sweetness and saltiness and adjust if necessary, then whizz again.
3 Transfer to a jar and leave to cool completely. Toast the bread, then spread thickly with the seed butter.
COOK'S TIP The seed butter can be stored in the fridge, in an airtight jar, for up to 2 weeks.

■ PER SERVING (WITH 20g SEED BUTTER)
209 cals, fat 11g, sat fat 1g, carbs 19g, sugars 2g, protein 7g, salt 1.5g, fibre 4g

Panzanella bruschetta V

The secret to a panzanella – Italian bread salad – is to salt the tomatoes in advance so that they give up their juices, which are then soaked up by the chunks of stale bread. Here, the bread is replaced with oily, garlicky toast – delicious and more portable.

Makes 12 bruschetta
Prep/cook 20 mins + soaking

350g red and yellow baby tomatoes
½ small red onion, finely sliced
12 slices pane pugliese
2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
2 cloves garlic, halved
2 tsp capers, roughly chopped
2 tsp red wine vinegar
pinch of sugar
handful of basil leaves, large ones torn
salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 Halve or quarter the tomatoes. Tip them into a bowl and sprinkle with a little salt. Place the sliced onion in a bowl, sprinkle with a little salt and cover with cold water. Set the tomatoes and onion aside for 15 minutes.
2 Meanwhile, heat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Drizzle the slices of bread with a little oil and bake for 6–8 minutes, until golden and crisp. Rub with the cut side of the garlic.
3 Drain the tomatoes, reserving the juices, and tip into a bowl. Drain the onions and add these to the tomatoes, along with the capers. In another bowl, whisk together 1 tablespoon of the reserved tomato juices, the vinegar, sugar and the oil. Season and pour this over the tomatoes. Set aside for 15 minutes to let the flavours develop.
4 Stir through most of the basil then pile on to the pieces of toast, letting the juices soak through. Scatter over the remaining basil before serving.

■ PER BRUSCHETTA 105 cals, fat 4.5g, sat fat 0.5g, carbs 14.5g, sugars 2.5g, protein 2.5g, salt 1.4g, fibre 1.5g



PANZANELLA BRUSCHETTA

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LOUISE HAGGER

Buck rarebit

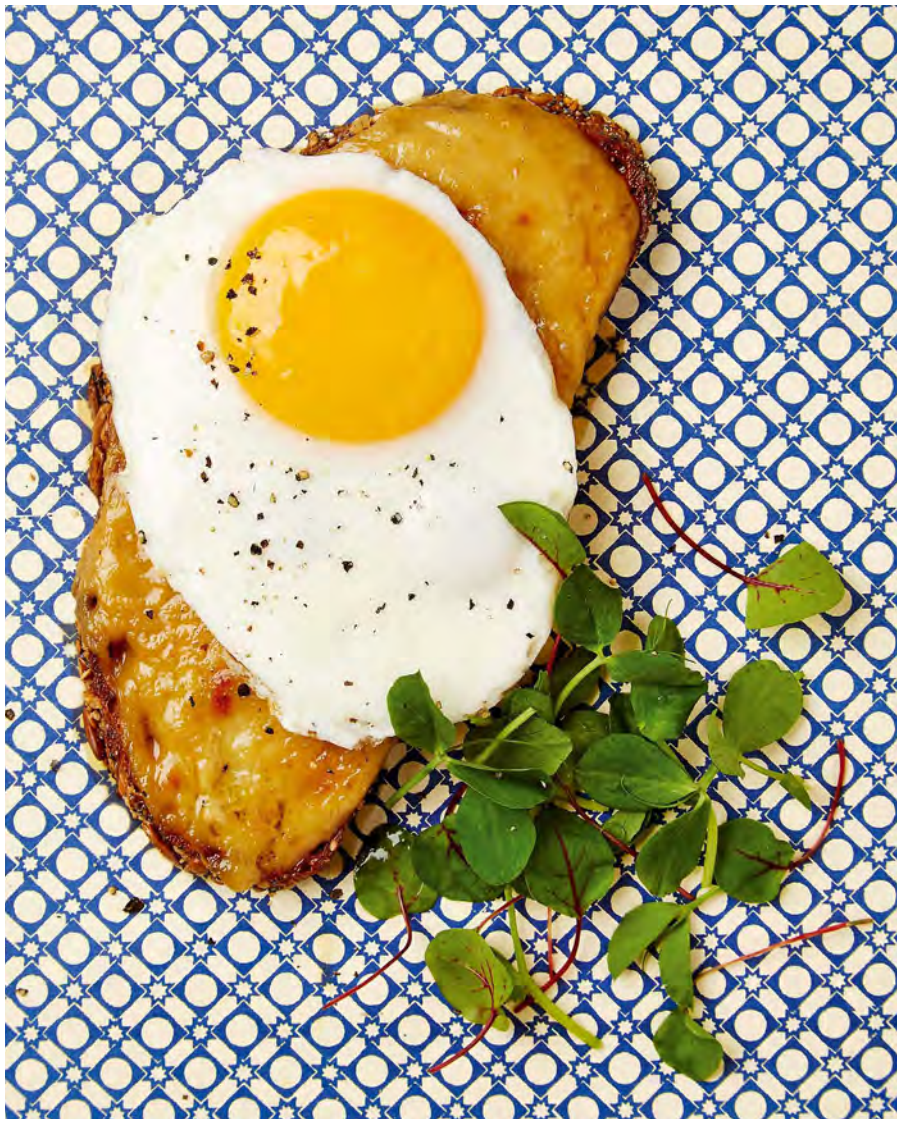
Most aficionados would argue that a good Welsh rarebit cannot be improved upon. That's until you put an egg on it. A fried egg can improve almost any food and in the buck rarebit, it also creates a legendary hangover cure.

Serves 6 | Prep/cook 25 minutes

50g butter
50g plain flour
250ml ale
175g mature vegetarian Cheddar, grated
3 tbsp crème fraîche
2 tsp English mustard
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce (see cook's tip, below)
6 slices seeded bread
sunflower oil, for frying
6 free-range eggs
handful of pea shoots or baby leaf salad leaves
salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 Melt the butter in a saucepan and, once foaming, add the flour and stir well to form a paste. Cook for 30 seconds to 1 minute until bubbling. Gradually whisk in the ale until you have a smooth thickish sauce then let it bubble for 1–2 minutes. Add the cheese, creme fraiche, mustard, Worcestershire sauce and some seasoning and stir until melted and combined. Set aside to cool and firm up a little.
2 Heat the grill to medium. Lightly toast the bread then spread the cheese mixture thickly on to one side. Pop under the grill for a few minutes, or until golden and bubbling.
3 Meanwhile, heat a little oil in a frying pan. Once hot, crack in three of the eggs and fry until the whites are set but the yolks are still runny. Remove from the pan and repeat with the remaining eggs. Pop the fried eggs on top of the cheesy toast, then grind over some more black pepper to finish.
4 Serve with pea shoots or baby leaf salad leaves.
COOK'S TIP Not all Worcestershire sauce brands are suitable for vegetarians because of the added anchovies, so check the label before you buy.
■ PER SERVING 483 cals, fat 34g, sat fat 16g, carbs 23.5g, sugars 3g, protein 19.5g, salt 2.9g, fibre 3g

BUCK RAREBIT





Labneh maneesh flatbread

You'll make more labneh than you need for the flatbreads. Keep it covered in the fridge for up to a week and use it to top salads or as a dip.

Serves 2
Prep/cook 20 mins + straining

500g 10% fat Greek-style yogurt
½ clove garlic, crushed
2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra to drizzle
2½ tbsp za'atar
2 flatbreads
25g pistachios
2 handfuls of mint leaves
½ tsp sumac
salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 First make the labneh. Mix the yogurt and ½ teaspoon of salt together in a bowl. Line a sieve with muslin cloth or cheesecloth and spoon in the yogurt. Gather up the ends of the cloth and suspend the sieve over a bowl. Place in the fridge and leave to strain for about 8 hours, until thickened.
2 Preheat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Spoon 200g of the labneh into a bowl and stir through the crushed garlic. In a separate bowl, mix together the olive oil, za'atar and some seasoning.
3 Place the flatbreads on a baking tray and spread with the za'atar mixture. Dollop over spoonfuls of the garlic labneh and spread it out a little. Cook in the oven for 10–12 minutes, until the breads are golden and crisp.
4 Tip the pistachios on to a small baking tray and toast in the oven for 8 minutes with the flatbreads. Leave to cool, then roughly chop.
5 Allow the flatbreads to cool for a moment, then scatter over the

FOR MORE RECIPE IDEAS USING HOMEMADE LABNEH, SEE PAGE 29.

LABNEH MANEESH FLATBREAD



CHOCOLATE SPREAD WITH CREAM CHEESE



pistachios, mint leaves, sumac and a little drizzle of oil.

■ PER SERVING 451 cals, fat 20.5g, sat fat 7.5g, carbs 53.5g, sugars 9.5g, protein 15g, salt 3g, fibre 3g

Chocolate spread with cream cheese

This recipe makes a large jar of chocolate spread. You won't need it all but it will keep in the fridge for up to two weeks.

Serves 4
Prep/cook 30 mins + cooling

250g hazelnuts
75g dark chocolate, roughly chopped
75g milk chocolate, roughly chopped
1 tbsp cocoa powder
75g icing sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract
pinch of salt
4 slices wholemeal bread
175g cream cheese

1 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Tip the nuts on to a baking tray and roast in the oven for 15 minutes, shaking every so often, until golden brown. Leave to cool a little, then tip 200g of the roasted nuts into the bowl of a food processor.

2 Meanwhile, tip both chocolates into a bowl and melt over a pan of barely simmering water, then allow to cool.

3 Blend the nuts to a paste in the food processor. Sift in the cocoa powder and icing sugar, then add the cooled melted chocolate, vanilla extract and a good pinch of salt. Blend until smooth – about 10 minutes – scraping the mixture down from the sides every so often. Transfer to a jar, then leave to cool completely and firm up a little.

4 Toast the bread and spread thickly with the cream cheese. Top with several spoonfuls of chocolate spread, then roughly chop the remaining roasted hazelnuts and scatter these over the top.

■ PER SERVING (WITH 20g SPREAD) 376 cals, fat 30g, sat fat 15g, carbs 20g, sugars 7.5g, protein 6g, salt 0.8g, fibre 3g



FOR MORE IDEAS...

Readers can purchase a copy of *Posh Toast* for the special price of £7.99 (RRP £12.99) with free p&p, call 01256 302699 and quote code FE9.

Recipes adapted from *Posh Toast* by Emily Kydd, with additional text by Tim Hayward and Sarah Lavelle (Quadrille, £12.99). Photography by Louise Hagger.

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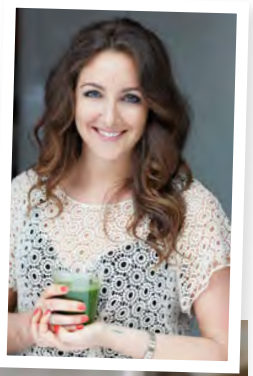
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HEALTHY LIVING

For a more nutritious twist on an American classic, try Honestly Healthy Natasha Corrett's alternative version of this seasonal dessert.



Pumpkin pie

My step-father is American, so we would celebrate Thanksgiving in our home. I have always been intrigued by pumpkin pie – it being both sweet and savoury – so I had great fun creating this recipe.

Serves 8 | **Prep** 20 mins + soaking
Cook 1 hr 20 mins

For the crust:
50g dates, pitted
65ml hot water
1 tbsp sunflower oil
200g ground almonds
⅛ tsp ground nutmeg

For the filling:
600g pumpkin, peeled and roughly chopped
1 tbsp sunflower oil
3 free-range eggs
1 tsp ground cinnamon
¼ tsp ground ginger
¼ tsp mixed spice
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 tbsp coconut flour
2 tbsp agave syrup



1 Preheat the oven to 170C/fan 150C/gas 3, and line a 15cm tart tin with baking parchment. Soak the dates for 10 minutes in the measured water, then drain.
2 Put all the crust ingredients into a food processor and pulse until they come together to form a ball. Carefully tip the ball into the tin and press the 'dough' evenly all around.
3 Prick the dough and bake for 15–20 minutes or until lightly golden. Remove from the oven and allow to cool for 20 minutes before adding the filling.
4 Roast the pumpkin with the sunflower oil for 20 minutes, until it is soft. Remove from the oven and allow to cool.
5 Transfer the roasted pumpkin to a blender and whizz until smooth. Then add the eggs, spices, vanilla extract, coconut flour and agave syrup and blend again until you get a super-smooth mixture. Transfer the mixture into the crust and bake for 30–40 minutes. Remove from the oven and allow to cool.

■ PER SERVING 268 cals, fat 19g, sat fat 2g, carbs 14g, sugars 10g, protein 9g, salt 0.1g, fibre 4g

For more free-from ideas, go to www.hollandandbarrett.com/shop/free-from, or find further inspiration in Natasha Corrett's book, *Honestly Healthy for Life* (Jacqui Small, £25).

NOURISH YOURSELF

Chef Lisa Roukin's first cookbook is a personal collection of her favourite seasonal and healthy recipes using virtually no gluten, dairy or refined sugars, proving that free-from cooking doesn't mean free-from flavour.



Jerusalem artichoke soup with parsnip crisps V

A good way to try those 'funny-looking' vegetables, this is a truly warming and satisfying soup with the added bonus of a crispy parsnip topping.

Serves 6 | **Prep** 20 mins | **Cook** 35 mins

3 tbsp olive or rice bran oil
2 echalion shallots, finely sliced (or 4 shallots)
2 cloves garlic, peeled
1kg Jerusalem artichokes, peeled and cut into 4cm pieces
2 parsnips, peeled and cut into 2cm pieces
960ml vegetable stock
1 tbsp coconut yogurt (optional)
sea salt and white pepper

For the parsnip crisps:
2 parsnips, peeled with vegetable peeler
300ml sunflower oil, for frying

1 Heat the oil in a heavy saucepan and sauté the shallots until translucent. Add the garlic and sauté for 1 minute, continually stirring (be careful not to burn the garlic). Add the Jerusalem artichokes and parsnips, and sauté for a few minutes over a gentle heat.
2 Add the stock gradually. You may not need all of it, as Jerusalem artichokes are very watery when cooked. Bring to the boil. Season with salt and pepper, cover and cook for 30 minutes over a low heat, until the artichokes and parsnips are very tender.
3 Purée the soup in a food processor or using a hand-held blender. Add the coconut yogurt, if using, then taste and adjust the seasoning.
4 To make the parsnip crisps, peel the outer skin of the parsnips, discard, then continue peeling so you get strips the length of the parsnip.
5 Preheat the sunflower oil in a deep medium saucepan. You will need to fill the saucepan halfway with oil. Drop in a handful of the thinly sliced parsnip, in batches, and as soon as they start to change colour, remove from the hot oil using a slotted metal spoon. Place on kitchen paper and sprinkle with some salt. Repeat with the remaining parsnip.
6 Gently reheat the soup and serve garnished with the parsnip crisps.
COOK'S TIP If you'd like to make a Jerusalem artichoke risotto, keep the puréed vegetables from the beginning stages and freeze to use when needed.



JERUSALEM ARTICHOKE SOUP WITH PARSNIP CRISPS

PHOTOGRAPHY: DAVID MUNNS

■ PER SERVING 357 cals, fat 19.5g, sat fat 2.5g, carbs 34g, sugars 16g, protein 6g, salt 1.8g, fibre 15g

go vegan
V If you decide to add in the optional coconut yogurt to the soup, go for a vegan brand, like Co-Yo.

Roasted aubergine with tahini and pomegranate

A beautiful dish which marries jewel-like pomegranate seeds with the black skin of the aubergines.

Serves 6 | **Prep** 20 mins | **Cook** 1 hr

3 large aubergines
4 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
2 tsp sesame seed oil
sea salt and cracked black pepper
garlic granules
2 tbsp acacia honey
2 tbsp toasted sesame seeds
1 handful of fresh coriander
½ pomegranate, deseeded

For the tahini dressing:
3 tbsp tahini paste
3 tbsp cold water
squeeze of lemon juice
1 tsp garlic paste

1 Preheat the oven to 180C/fan 160C/gas 4. Line a large baking tray with baking parchment.
2 Cut the aubergines in half lengthwise (keeping the stalk on). With the tip of a knife, score the flesh deeply in a diamond criss-cross pattern by making 5–6 long cuts on the diagonal, cutting at a steep angle, and then rotating the aubergines to make another set of similar cuts (although do not cut through to the skin).
3 Brush both sides with 2 tablespoons of the olive oil and the sesame seed oil. Put the aubergine cut-side facing up on the baking tray and season with salt, pepper and garlic granules. Place in the oven and bake for 40–50 minutes.
4 Check during cooking to make sure the aubergine does not burn. If it isn't tender all the way through, bake for a further 5–10 minutes. Remove from the oven, drizzle with the remaining olive oil, then leave to cool.
5 To make the tahini paste, mix the ingredients together and season with salt.
6 To serve, place the roasted aubergine on a plate. Spoon the tahini paste around the plate, and drizzle the honey around the plate and over the aubergine. Then garnish with the toasted sesame seeds, fresh coriander and pomegranate seeds.

■ PER SERVING 296 cals, fat 23.5g, sat fat 3.5g, carbs 9.5g, sugars 9g, protein 9.5g, salt 1g, fibre 6g



ROASTED AUBERGINE WITH TAHINI AND POMEGRANATE

'The cookbook details my journey towards healthy eating and my philosophy of nourishment, which I've found strikes the best balance between food enjoyment and health'


SHAKSHUKA


SWEET POTATO GRATIN

Shakshuka

This is my version and it has a twist! I'm not a fan of peppers, so I add shiitake mushrooms and kale. If you want more heat, add some chilli flakes or a touch of Tabasco. I love to serve this dish with fresh avocado on the side and some gluten-free bread to wipe up the delicious sauce!

Serves 6 | **Prep** 30 mins | **Cook** 33 mins

4 tbsp sunflower or coconut oil (odourless)
1 large onion, thinly sliced
125g shiitake mushrooms, thinly sliced, stems removed
sea salt and white pepper
garlic granules
50g curly kale, stems removed
500ml tomato sauce
6 large free-range eggs
cracked black pepper

1 Heat the sunflower or coconut oil in a large frying pan, and sauté the onions for 5 minutes until soft and translucent.
2 Add the mushrooms and cook for 2 minutes. Season well with salt, pepper and garlic granules and cook for a further 3 minutes. Add the curly kale and cook for 5 minutes, stirring continuously.
3 Pour in the tomato sauce and cook for 10 minutes on a low heat to reduce the sauce.
4 Remove from the heat. Crack an egg into a wine glass, then make a little well in the sauce and pour in the whole egg. Repeat with each egg.
5 Place the frying pan back on the heat and cook, covered, for 6–8 minutes until the eggs are set. Serve straight from the pan with a sprinkle of black pepper.

■ PER SERVING 204 cals, fat 14.5g, sat fat 3g, carbs 8.5g, sugars 6.5g, protein 9.5g, salt 2g, fibre 1.5g

Sweet potato gratin V

A healthier version of the classic potato gratin, with the refreshing flavours of fresh coriander and coconut milk.

Serves 4 | **Prep** 20 mins
Cook 1 hr 5 mins

2 tbsp coconut oil
2 onions, finely sliced
sea salt
white pepper
chilli flakes
2 cloves garlic, crushed
2 tsp palm sugar
1 large handful of fresh coriander, finely chopped
3 large sweet potatoes, peeled and sliced on a mandolin
200ml coconut milk
60g medium cornmeal
black pepper

1 Preheat the oven to 190C/fan 170C/gas 5.
2 In a non-stick frying pan, heat the coconut oil then sauté the onions until soft and translucent. Season with salt, white pepper and chilli flakes. Add the garlic, sugar and coriander to the onions and continue to cook over a gentle heat for a few minutes.
3 Put the onions in a 23cm circular or oval ovenproof dish. Cover with the sweet potatoes, overlapping and seasoning each layer with a little sea salt and black pepper. Pour the coconut milk over the sweet potatoes, until covered.
4 In a small bowl, season the cornmeal with salt and white pepper, then sprinkle it over the sweet potatoes to cover the dish.
5 Bake, uncovered, for about 1 hour, turning the dish in the oven after 30 minutes to ensure uniform baking.
6 When the potatoes are tender and the top is crisp and golden brown, remove from the

oven and allow to rest for 2–3 minutes, so the potatoes can absorb some extra liquid. If the top isn't crispy, pop under the grill for 1–2 minutes before serving.

■ PER SERVING 578 cals, fat 28g, sat fat 16g, carbs 76.5g, sugars 22.5g, protein 6g, salt 1.6g, fibre 7.5g

Raw chocolate mousse cake V

A silky mousse cake with a crunchy base and the wonderful flavours of chocolate and coconut – if you love chocolate as much as I do, then this is for you! Yes, it is possible to prepare the chocolate mousse from only a couple of ingredients without dairy, cream or eggs. Make sure you refrigerate the cans of coconut milk and cream overnight to solidify and separate.

Serves 14 | **Prep** 1 hr + freezing

For the crust:
100g pistachio nuts
150g blanched almonds
50g desiccated coconut
200g dates (presoaked if hard)
3 tsp lemon juice
1 pinch of sea salt

For the chocolate covering:
2 x 400ml full-fat coconut milk (keep refrigerated)
160ml coconut cream (keep refrigerated), 2 tsp reserved for decorating
200g dark chocolate
3 tbsp date syrup
2 tsp custard powder

1 Line the base and sides of a 20cm non-stick springform cake tin with parchment paper.

2 Place the pistachios, almonds and coconut into a food processor and pulse until a chunky sandy consistency is formed. Place into a clean bowl. Add the dates, lemon juice and salt to the food processor, then blend until smooth.

3 Add the pistachio nut mixture back into the food processor, and blend until it forms a ball. Place the nut and date mixture into your prepared tin, press down firmly on the base and 2.5cm around the sides, then put in the freezer for 20 minutes.

4 Remove the coconut milk cans from the fridge, turn them upside down and open the 'wrong end' (the milk will separate from the cream in the fridge). Pass the coconut milk and cream through a sieve (you only want to use the hardened cream part of the coconut, not the milk for this recipe). Spoon into a food mixer or use an electric hand-held whisk. Beat for about 4–5 minutes, stopping occasionally to scrape down the sides of the bowl.

5 Melt the chocolate in a bowl over a pan of gently simmering water, then add the date syrup and custard powder. Leave to cool, then add the cream (reserving 2 teaspoons to decorate), slowly folding it into the chocolate and mixing well. If the chocolate gets hard and gritty when folding in the whipped cream, don't panic, just place the bowl back over the pan of water and stir until smooth.

6 Remove the nut base from the freezer. When the chocolate mixture is smooth, pour into the base and smooth the top. Drizzle the remaining whipped coconut cream over the top of the chocolate mousse and then, using a fork, carefully swirl the cream into the chocolate to get a marbled effect. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

■ PER SERVING 449 cals, fat 35.5g, sat fat 20g, carbs 26.5g, sugars 24g, protein 6.5g, salt 0.3g, fibre 2.5g



RAW CHOCOLATE MOUSSE CAKE

govegan

V It's worth double-checking dark chocolate packaging, to ensure no dairy ingredients have been added.



Recipes adapted from *My Relationship with Food* by Lisa Roukin (Spiffing Covers, £22). Photography by David Munns. www.myrelationshipwithfood.com

BEAUTY AND THE BREAST

It's great to be able to buy beauty products knowing we are helping support a good cause. But could our beauty routine be linked with breast cancer in much less positive ways? Louise Bowers of Breast Cancer UK explains how.

Many of us love a bit of pampering, who doesn't? But on an average day we may use 8–12 products on our face and body, containing any number of synthetic chemicals. From deodorants to keep us smelling fresh to the nail polish we use to make our pinkies pretty, it is this exposure to such a wide variety of chemicals that Breast Cancer UK are concerned about. Although it isn't possible to say what someone should do to completely avoid breast cancer – as many factors can be involved, including genetics and lifestyle – we like to adopt a precautionary approach.

Not all chemical additives are harmful, but some may be capable of causing cancer (carcinogens) or of interfering with our normal hormone functions – these are known as endocrine disrupting chemicals or EDCs. For example, parabens, which are commonly used as preservatives in cosmetics, may mimic the action of the female hormone oestrogen. Studies suggest that high levels of circulating oestrogens increase the risk of developing breast cancer and there is concern that oestrogen mimics may have a similar effect.

To reduce your exposure, consider switching to natural deodorants or using body washes free of parabens, and opting for essential oil-based fragrances or unfragranced products. Visit **www.breastcanceruk.org.uk** (search under 'reduce your risk') for a number of guides to choosing safer beauty products.



BREAST CARE

BY SARA NIVEN, BEAUTY EDITOR





We're in the pink, with beauty products to mark Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October.

Get your glow back



If you've had any type of cancer, it can often have a knock-on effect on how you feel about your appearance and self-confidence generally – an issue tackled by Jennifer Young in her new book, *Recognise Yourself: Beauty Despite Cancer* (Lotus Publishing, £14.99). It explores areas including beauty, self-image and self-esteem for anyone going through cancer treatment and experiencing the changes that involves.

'Most chemotherapy drugs can't differentiate between types of fast-growing cells and so attack all,' explains Jennifer. 'Hair is lost, lips get chapped, skin becomes dry and sore, and nails can become fragile or fall off. My top tip for women going through treatment for breast cancer, or any other type, is to moisturise. A specialist balm or oil for skin, scalp, nails and lips can make an enormous difference. It won't stop the side effects but it can lessen the discomfort, and means your skin is in a better place for make-up to disguise the loss of brows and lashes, and your scalp can tolerate a wig.'

For more advice, go to Jennifer's website at **www.beautydespitecancer.co.uk**.

Disclaimer: *Vegetarian Living* only features products that are entirely vegetarian and/or vegan in formulation. The magazine also requests an assurance that the product and ingredients within it are not tested on animals and the company does not carry out or fund animal testing either in the UK or overseas. However, formulations can change and policies can vary, so we would advise checking directly with the companies if you have any concerns.



1 Jane Iredale's limited edition Smell the Roses natural hydration spray donates 100% of net profits to the Against Breast Cancer charity. Containing organic rose damascena flower water, this spray has Ecocert's Natural and Organic Cosmetics certification.
£22.50 from www.mineralbeauty.co.uk or visit www.janeiredale.co.uk for stockists.



3 Crabtree & Evelyn are aiming to donate £5,000 to Breast Cancer Care with £1 donations from sales of their Evelyn Rose products this month. The paraben-free range is inspired by rose expert David Austin's English roses.
Body cream £30, body lotion £20, bath and shower gel £16 and eau de parfum £45. All from www.crabtree-evelyn.co.uk.

5 Elemis has produced a special pink edition of their Pro-Radiance Illuminating Flash Balm and pledged to donate £10,000 to Breast Cancer Care. The vegan-friendly balm is aimed at enhancing complexions and reducing the appearance of imperfections.
£33 from www.elemis.com.

OUR PICK
Pink products to support Breast Cancer charities





2 A brilliant budget option is the Nspa collection at ASDA, which includes a raspberry body mist, shower scrub, body butter, and shower and bath gel. As part of ASDA's Tickled Pink campaign, 20p from the sale of each of these products will go to support Breast Cancer Care and Breast Cancer Now.
Nspa Raspberry Daily Refresh Shower Scrub £3; Nspa Raspberry Rich Body Butter £3. All four products will be available in ASDA stores and www.george.com from mid-September.

4 GHD's Breast Cancer Awareness products include the platinum styler (£165), hairdryer (£99.99), paddle brush (£20) and styling clips (£2), with donations of between 6–50% going to Breast Cancer Now, depending on product.
Available nationwide from salons and www.ghdhair.com.





ASK THE BEAUTY EDITOR

I'm recovering from breast cancer and would like a makeover to boost my confidence, but I'm intimidated by beauty counters and concerned about the costs of visiting a salon. Any suggestions?

Firstly, don't rule out beauty counters – many will offer free consultations if they think you're interested in a new product, so it's worth finding out.

However, if you want someone who really understands your situation, Boots have 600 special beauty advisors across their UK stores who have been trained by Macmillan Cancer Support. They offer expert, practical advice for anyone affected by any kind of cancer and can suggest everything from the best moisturisers to use on sensitive skin to giving eyebrow tutorials for people who have lost their hair during treatment. Visit **www.boots.com/storelocator** to find your nearest Boots Macmillan Beauty Advisor.



vegetarian LIVING

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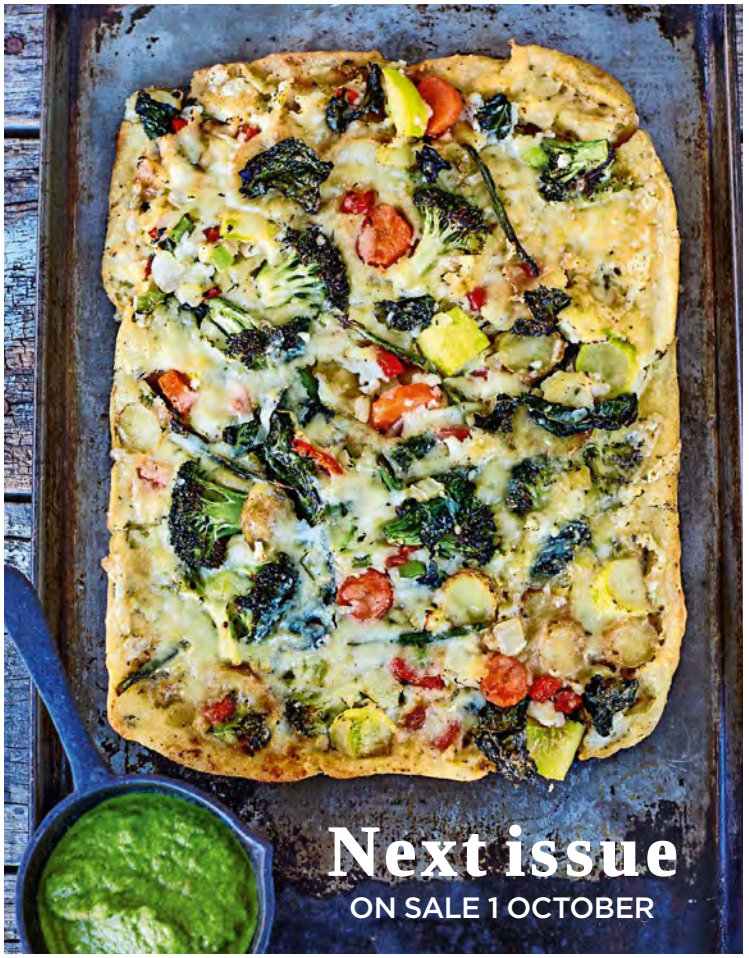
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www.vegetarianliving.co.uk



Taken from *My Life on a Plate* by Kelis (Kyle Books, £19.99). Photography by David Loftus.

USEFUL CONVERSIONS

Use these handy conversion guides to help you out in the kitchen. For readers in Australia or the USA who prefer to use cup measurements, try an online converter, like the user-friendly calculator at **www.theonlineconverter.co.uk**.

WEIGHT

10g	¼oz	700g	1lb 9oz
25g	1oz	800g	1lb 12oz
50g	1¾oz	900g	2lb
75g	2¾oz	1kg	2lb 4oz
100g	3oz		
125g	4½oz		
150g	5½oz		
175g	6oz		
200g	7oz		
225g	8oz		
250g	9oz		
275g	9¾oz		
300g	10½oz		
325g	11½oz		
350g	12oz		
375g	13oz		
400g	14oz		
425g	15oz		
450g	1lb		
500g	1lb 20z		
600g	1lb 5oz		



OVEN TEMPERATURES

Celsius	Fahrenheit	Gas mark
110	225	¼
130	250	½
140	275	1
150	300	2
170	325	3
180	350	4
190	375	5
200	400	6
220	425	7
230	455	8

VOLUME

30ml	1fl oz
50ml	2fl oz
100ml	3½fl oz
125ml	4fl oz
150ml	5fl oz (¼ pint)
175ml	6fl oz
200ml	7fl oz
300ml	10fl oz (½ pint)
400ml	14fl oz
500ml	18fl oz
600ml	1 pint
700ml	1¼ pints
850ml	1½ pints
1 litre	1¾ pints
1.2 litres	2 pints

SOURCE: Guild of Food Writers

CITRUS BURST

Foodie Flavours produces a wide range of gluten-, egg- and dairy-free professional quality natural flavouring oils that are all suitable for vegetarians and vegans. The menu of flavours includes popular varieties such as almond, lavender, vanilla and a range of nut and fruit options. Bringing together a trio of popular fruit flavourings, the 'Citrus Set' of lemon, lime and orange natural flavouring oils includes three bottles of high strength, natural flavours at a discounted price (normally £3.99 each). These kitchen essentials are all made in the UK and are ideal for baking, cooking and desserts – only a few drops are needed to make favourite recipes such as lemon drizzle cake.

● *£9.99 from* **www.foodieflavours.com**.



FEEL THE FRESHNESS



Created using the highest quality ingredients, Organii certified organic mouthwashes provide a natural way to fight bad breath and gingivitis, whilst protecting teeth and gums. Available in eucalyptus or citrus flavour, these 100% naturally flavoured mouthwashes are suitable for vegans, free from artificial preservatives or added colourants, and are dermatologically tested, improving your oral health in the most natural way.

● *£5.95 from* **www.organii.co.uk**.

ESSENTIAL OILS



Feeding the body with an adequate supply of undamaged fats is essential for optimum health. Stock up on a premium and organic seed oil blend like Udo's Choice Ultimate Oil Blend, which can be taken daily to boost your omega-3 and 6 essential fatty acids intake. Simply drizzle over salads, add to juices or blend into a fruit smoothie.

● *£21.99 from* **www.udoschoice.co.uk**.

THE ESSENTIAL COLLECTION

A shopping guide to the latest products for your vegetarian or vegan lifestyle…



RAISE THE BAR

The Vego Bar is a super-tasty vegan chocolate treat. Organic, certified Fairtrade and gluten-free, the Vego Bar combines the finest chocolate with Italian hazelnut paste and hazelnut cocoa cream, resulting in a smooth, creamy chocolate bar generously packed with whole hazelnuts.

● *150g bar £3.25 or 65g bar £1.85 from* **www.ethicalsuperstore.com**. *Enter code X2VEGO at the checkout and get £2 off your order (offer expires 3 November 2015).*

SMOOTH OPERATOR



Super Hydrating Face Cream is a new extra-rich moisturiser from Handmade Naturals, which has been blended to hydrate dry skin and keep signs of ageing at bay. With nourishing cocoa butter, avocado and borage seed oils, it can be used as a night-time moisturiser for normal/combination skin types, plus it's vegan, 100% natural and certified cruelty-free.

● *£11.50 from* **www.handmadenaturals.co.uk** *or call 01270 877516.*



COCONUT GOODNESS

Perfect for adding to desserts, smoothies, cooking and baking, Tiana Raw Organic Coconut Goodness is nothing but pure white unsweetened coconut flesh from raw organic coconuts. This deliciously creamy cold-pressed coconut simply melts in your mouth and provides all the benefits of raw coconut, including dietary fibre, protein and lauric acid.

● *£9.99 from Holland & Barrett and good independent health stores.*

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Alex Bourke of Vegetarian Guides discovers how to eat veggie in this vibrant North African destination.







MOROCCO

Morocco is a dream destination, just past Spain yet a world away, full of beautiful riads (houses) with interior courtyards, deserts, snow-capped mountains, beaches and 300 days of sun. Veggie options abound – just check for meat broth or, if vegan, butter, and to be safe take the *Vegan Passport* (see offer, below) unless you speak French or Arabic. The staples are vegetable salads, couscous with veg, and tagine – a Berber slow-cooked savoury stew served with bread. Popular soups are bisara – a thick green pea soup with cumin and olive oil – and harira, made with tomatoes, onions, chickpeas and lentils. Pick up snacks at the souk (market), such as local organic fruit, olives, nuts and seeds.

In the windsurfing capital Essaouira, head for **Shyadma's Vegan Food** in a quiet square in the old medina. Relax in the sun with olives, bread and local argan oil while they prepare a tagine – served sizzling in a pot also called a tagine – containing green beans and prunes, olives and lemon, onion, lentils or chickpeas. They also serve harira, salads, and a red bean, chickpea and lentil burger. Cool off at **Yoo**, a frozen yogurt café in the middle of the souk with shakes, smoothies, cold pressed juices, fruit and veg pots, and panini sandwiches.

In Marrakech there are two organic vegetarian **Earth Cafés** in back streets off Jemaa El Fna main square and market. Their specialities are spring rolls, pastries stuffed with roast veg and herbs, burgers, veggies with lentils and rice, and apple tart for dessert. You can also reserve a place on their morning cookery classes and stay for lunch.

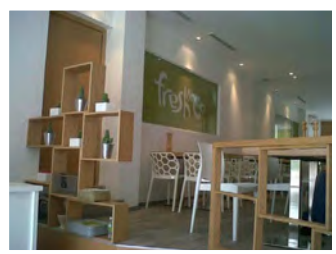
At **Afroux** vegetarian café, 100km east of Marrakech at the foot of the High Atlas mountains, owner Hassan is passionate about veggie food being better for the environment. Sip tea with raw almonds at a low wooden table on the vine-covered terrace, before tucking into a tagine with up to 20 local organic ingredients, flavoured with wild rosemary and garlic. For dessert, go for simple sliced melon and grapes, and coffee spiced with cinnamon and herbs.





Also recommended...

- **Triskala** in Essaouira is a tiny vegetarian and fish eco-restaurant with only local food such as couscous, spinach and melon salad, soup and falafels. Desserts include chocolate fondant and pear turnover.
- **Café Clock** in Fez and Marrakech marks veggie items on the English menu, such as Moroccan tapas, and even has breakfast muesli or pancakes with caramelised banana.
- **Dar Attajalli** boutique hotel in Fez has an upmarket rooftop restaurant specialising in vegetarian cuisine and open to non-residents.



- In Casablanca, local vegans recommend **Zayna** in Place Habous for traditional fare, or **Fresh & Co** for light lunches such as tabbouleh with organic lentils, quinoa salad, and grilled veg wraps.
- **Satvada Retreats** run yoga and mindfulness retreats for all levels and ages, with vegetarian catering, year-round in Marrakech and other locations.

NEED TO KNOW

Shyadma's Vegan Food
20 Rue Laalouj,
Place El Khayma, Essaouira
Tel: +212-6-15-28-72-08

Yoo
Facebook: Yoo Essaouira

Earth Café
www.earthcafemarrakech.com
Facebook: Earth Café Marrakech

Afroux Café
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Tel: +212-673-877137

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Satvada Retreats
www.satvada-retreats.co.uk

- For more info, visit
www.visitmorocco.com
www.lonelyplanet.com

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ESSENTIAL GUIDE

Readers can buy the *Vegan Passport* (RRP £4.99) from Vegetarian Guides for the special price of £3.99, including p&p. The passport-sized book has a page for each of 74 languages, explaining what vegans do and don't eat. Visit www.vegetarianguides.co.uk/veglivingoct. Offer ends 31 October 2015.



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